Eight years in Asia and Africa from 1846-1855

Israel Joseph Benjamin

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הנוסע העברי ישראל בן יוסף בנימין השני

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EIGHT YEARS

IN

ASIA AND AFRICA

FROM 1846 TO 1855.

BY

J. J. BENJAMIN II.
FROM FOLTITSCHENY IN THE MOLDAVIA.

WITH A PREFACE BY DR. BERTHOLD SEEMANN.

WITH A MAP AND CORRESPONDING NOTES FROM BENJAMIN OF TUDELA, R. PETACHIA, PEDRO TEIXEIRA AND RITTER'S ERDKUNDE.

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PREFACE.

One of the most pleasing contemplations of our time is to see abuses, which have existed for thousands of years, corrected and prejudices sanctioned by numberless centuries removed. The sun of enlightenment begins to reach the remotest parts of the earth, and warms with its rays objects and conditions, which appeared to have been condemned for ever to an icy death-like life. In simple words: Science now more than ever makes its salutary influence felt, and all that does not rest upon that foundation, finds its very continuation threatened. Whereever it can be applied one knows beforehand to which side victory will finally incline; and it is this conviction that spurs on to ever fresh exertion, and ever inspires fresh courage for continued combat against everything false and bad; whether it appears to us in the form of prejudice, of abuse, of oppression or of vice. — The parts visited by Herr J. J. Benjamin, the countries of the East, offer to that exertion an immeasurable field; all that debases mankind has held there for centuries an undisturbed sway, and created such confusion in the notions of right and wrong, that for the present one dare not hope for a speedy removal of this fearful condition of society. Fanaticism stands forth there in its most repulsive form, and often with bloody finger traces the horrors of its errors on the pages of history. Might, not right, takes the precedence; and he, who pos-

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sesses not the former, can *never* obtain the latter. Before all others it is especially so with the Jews, who, everywhere dispersed, in no place forming a „people", are exposed to all the wretchedness of arbitrary government. Only in a few places, such as Bagdad, do they enjoy a happier condition, and develop there an activity and prosperity, which is as advantageous to themselves, as it is for the places in which they have settled. In most places however our Benjamin found his co-religionists crushed under the weight of arbitrary oppression, here and there even in absolute slavery, others only in name belonging to that great sect, whose traditions have exercised the most abiding influence upon mankind. The deepest resentment takes possession of the philanthropist at the description of such a condition; and filled with pity he looks around for the means to remedy such a state of things. Happily these lie nearer than a superficial consideration of the subject would incline us to suppose; they consist first in the removal of prejudices, under which the Jews still groan even in some of the most advanced parts of Europe. Every man of enlightenment, in whatever circle of society he may move, can do his part towards this; and as the great statesman, Lord Stratford de Redcliffe assured the British Parliament on the 27th April 1858, it is our failure hitherto in removing the fetters of prejudice in Western Countries, which binds the hands of the friends of religious freedom and political equality of the Jews in the East. — When the furtherance of such a sacred purpose is in question, surely it behoves every enlightened man to contribute joyfully his mite. Arguments in favour of his doing so are not wanting; for the learning of the last years have supplied them abundantly. Moreover the Jews, in every place where they have been put on a footing of equality with other religious sects, have developed an industry, attended by the most happy results for those countries which have accorded this act of justice; and this has authorised the political economist to ask with good reason: „If it would not be more advantageous to encourage by liberal concessions

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such an active intelligent people, rather than to restrict them in their material and mental progress?" — The Jews of our time have been most successful in their exertions in science and art, and many of the most esteemed names among poets and authors, have been pointed out by them with just pride as their brethren in the faith. What this highly gifted people have effected under the most unfavourable circumstances, under continual oppression and clogging prejudices, historians have sufficiently proved. But what, if free, they could effect for mankind and the world, bids defiance to every calculation; it offers the elements of a power which no political economist, no politician, who would not lay himself open to the charge of shortsightedness, dare undervalue. Wherever these people are found, even if it be in the most depressed state, they furnish matter for reflection, and germs capable of extraordinary developement. Apart from their Biblical history, great interest has always been connected with the Jews in their separation and dispersion; and to ascertain which country received the ten lost tribes of Israel is a scientific problem, the solution of which possesses universal importance. — To this end Benjamin's „Eight years in Asia and Africa" furnishes an unpretending but nevertheless a valuable contribution, which as such merits recommendation, even to those, who do not belong to the same faith as the estimable author. May these few words serve to recommend this book, — be a helping hand, which one traveller willingly lends to another when they accidentally meet, soon after by *different paths* to continue their earthly wanderings towards the *same goal.*

22. Canonbury Square, Islington, London.
May 3, 1858.

Berthold Seemann, Ph. D., F. L. S.,
Adjunctus Praesidii of the Imperial Leopoldino-Caroline Academy.

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

During the time that the present work was in course of printing, the author had the honour of being allowed to lay parts of it before several of the most renowned men of science, whose favourable opinions of them he prefixes to his own introductory lines; as in them he finds the best proof that his endeavours have not been quite destitute of result.

I.

Extract from a letter of His Excellency Baron Alexander v. Humboldt, Member of the King's Privy Council, and Chamberlain to His Majesty, at Berlin.

Acknowledging the noble purpose which you have pursued in your travels in distant lands to ascertain the condition of a scattered and oppressed people, I have read with much interest several portions of your book. You portray conditions of degradation in the oppressed, and of arbitrary power in the oppressors, which are but little known in Europe, and which will assuredly and with justice induce many to peruse your work.

May your new undertakings be likewise attended with success!

Berlin, March 25th 1858.

Alexander von Humboldt.

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II.

Opinion of Professor Dr. Carl Ritter in Berlin.

Several chapters which I have read from proof sheets of an oriental journey of Herr Benjamin have much interested me. They describe in very clear and simple language the adventures and experiences of the author; written certainly in a special point of view, but in the warmest interest of his brethren and companions in the faith. They are calculated to contribute in no slight degree, by awakening interest in the West, to new and more complete journies and researches for the improvement of their state in the East; and every real exertion in behalf of their oppressed condition must be attended with fruitful result for a better future.

Berlin, March 30th 1858.

C. Ritter, Dr. & Prof. phil.
Member of the Academy of Sciences.

III.

Opinion of Professor Dr. H. Petermann in Berlin.

The travels of Herr J. J. Benjamin, which he undertook in the same spirit as his celebrated namesake of Tudela, gives interesting disclosures respecting the dispersion of his brethren in the faith in the different countries he has visited, respecting their communities, their customs and traditions, and may serve, by being brought into comparison with the work of that Rabbi, to make known how the Israelitish population in those parts has in one part increased and in another decreased. Notwithstanding his partiality for his brethren he does not conceal their faults, their want of education and their superstition, when it comes to his view; and altogether his accounts bear the stamp of truth and

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credibility; so that the work, written as it is with freshness and liveliness, will gain the interest of many readers. This at any rate I heartily wish. — I can corroborate much of it by my own experience.

Berlin, March 29th 1858.

H. Petermann.

IV.

Opinion of Dr. A. Helfferich in Berlin.

To judge from what he has already accomplished, a second accurate research of Asia by Herr Benjamin would, in my opinion, lead to even more satisfactory results. He is perfectly conversant with the condition of things in that country, and just the man to draw forth information respecting the now completely lost remnant not only of the Jews, but likewise of the Nestorians of Central-Asia. An invaluable acquisition of manuscripts could be then expected, which could not fail to be welcome to every friend of civilisation. The more difficult it is to make researches amid the ruins of antiquity the more sincerely is it to be wished that many others would not shun the hazard of such a journey to these clouded but memorable countries; and the way and manner in which Herr Benjamin has understood his work, and in part has already accomplished it, justifies us in forming great hopes for the future. May the expectations of the worthy traveller himself be fulfilled!

Berlin, April 10th 1858.

Adolph Helfferich.

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V.

Opinion of Dr. Magnus in Breslau.

Being requested by Herr Benjamin from the Moldavia to give my opinion of his book of travels, which will shortly appear complete in print, concerning his eight years' wanderings and adventures in Asia and Africa; I can assert with the fullest confidence, as far as I have had an opportunity of looking through them, that these accounts are not only adapted to every educated person, as interesting and entertaining as well as instructive, but that they are, in so far as they describe from the author's own observation, the state of the Jews in the above mentioned countries at the present time, a valuable acquisition to science. Herr Benjamin's work possesses peculiar interest from the unassuming spirit and simple language in which it is written, reminding as of the book of travels of his celebrated brother in the faith and namesake of the 12th century after Christ, of the Massaot of Benjamin of Tudela, by the side of which it worthily deserves a place.

Breslau, June 15th 1858.

Dr. E. J. Magnus,
Prof. of Eastern and Rabbinical Literature
at the University of Breslau.

Space does not permit me to have printed with these the opinions of other learned men of our time.

After such recommendations as these I hardly dare venture myself, and in fact I deem it superfluous to say more of the work in question. After the exertions of several years I have found in *them* not only the richest reward for all my labours, but the courage necessary for the publication of this work, as well as a spur to me for unceasing efforts in the prosecution of that which I have begun.

In laying the results of my eight years' researches before the general reader as well as before all my brethren

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in the faith, I venture to reckon on the indulgent opinion of all those who know the difficult and almost impracticable task imposed upon me. Since the days of the venerable and celebrated Rabbi Benjamin of Tudela, no one has exclusively devoted himself to such a solemn undertaking, and this secular interruption of a highly important enterprise, increases the natural and numerous difficulties which oppose themselves to the prosecution of the matter.

Notwithstanding all these obstacles, I believe I have still succeeded in throwing some light on the remnant of the descendants of a people, whose long exile of hundreds of years has only appeared in the annals of history; of a people, who deserve the researches and sympathy of all those who are impressed with a knowledge of the high mission which Providence had assigned them. I have endeavoured by a faithful description of their present condition, and by an investigation of their ancient traditions, to draw them forth from their night of forgetfulness; happy shall I esteem myself if thereby I have been able to awaken some sympathy for them, and if I may hope to obtain some amelioration of their material condition, some of the benefits of civilisation, and in particular religious tolerance. Above all others, however, I wish to awaken the sympathy of my fellow-believers in Europe for their unhappy brethren, who are exiled in those inhospitable countries, which are seldom, if ever, trodden by the foot of a European. Under the yoke of fanaticism and barbarism for hundreds of years, nothwithstanding all persecutions and oppressions, notwithstanding pillage and murder, they have still remained steadfast in the faith of their fathers. If through my descriptions anything effectual should by really achieved, then indeed I should not consider lost the troubles and dangers of a long and wearisome pilgrimage.

Besides this great and chief object of my wanderings in the East, I have endeavoured to give in their proper places in my work, by the introduction of historical, geographical, statistical, and other notices, some elucidation, until now un-

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known, respecting the countries I have visited, and I hope that these will not be everywhere unwelcome.

The French original edition of this work only contains an account of my journey in Asia; and as I was not able to superintend personally the printing of it, a number of mistakes in the events themselves, as well as in the geographical names, have crept in. The present English edition contains besides the travels in Asia, accounts of my wanderings in Africa; and is likewise throughout corrected and improved.

After having ceased for a time my wanderings and researches for the purpose of publishing this work, I intend again to resume them. — In a short time I shall with God's help undertake a second journey to the East, for which I am furnished with a number of important instructions for my researches from esteemed hand, and hope after the completion of my journey to be able to furnish a more exact and valuable work.

Hannover, May 1859.

Israel Joseph Benjamin.

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INTRODUCTION

TO BENJAMIN'S ACCOUNT OF „EIGHT YEARS IN ASIA AND AFRICA."

Pedro Teixeira.

By

Dr. M. Kayserling.[1]

An unsettled and wandering life has been the appointed lot of the Jews for thousands of years. As this people in their early state led a nomadic life, so too in later years, after they had disappeared from the number of nations, did the unhappy Jews, accustomed to expulsion and exile, wander from place to place, from country to country, dependent on the policy and caprice of various Governors and Princes.

This unsettled, wandering life, which increased the sufferings of these despised outcasts, did not further the cause either of science or literature. He, who is driven forth as an exile, how can he have an eye for any spot but that on which he can rest his weary foot? How can the wanderer, fleeing from danger, seek on his long and weary journey any other place but that which protects him from his pursuers? — Those, who reflect on this, have no right to wonder that after all the journeys and wanderings, which the Jews above

[1] This sketch has been published at the wish, and for the benefit of Mr. Benjamin. As an addition to the history and geography of the Jews, may it find a friendly reception.

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all nations have been forced to undertake, the science of geography should have been so little benefitted. Talents and powers of observation were certainly not wanting to the travellers, but they were so entirely engrossed by themselves and their own fate, that they cared but little for that which surrounded them.

Like everything else it was in Spain that the history of Jewish travel also was early encouraged.

It is more than a mere metaphor to designate the Peninsula of Hesperia as the seat of the best informed and most learned Jews of the middle ages. Besides the profoundest study of the Talmud, philosophy, medecine, natural history and astrology were also cultivated and fostered by them; and it is from the Spanish Jews, that we received the first accounts of their travels.

Benjamin de Tudela, the well known Jewish traveller, was the first to direct his attention to his exiled brethren, and the events and results of his journey are described in that celebrated and valuable work, which bears his name, and has secured for him an undying reputation.

From Spain, his native country, *Charisi* began his wanderings. Having travelled through Spain and Provence, he visited Alexandria, and took up his residence in the Holy City, in that land, glorious in the sacred places it contains; and proceeded thence to Persia, and through Greece retourned to his own land.

The Jew, *Parchi*, was also a native of Spain. He journeyed through Egypt; and it is to him we are indebted for the accurate knowledge we possess of the condition of Palestine at that period.

The Jews of the Peninsula were learned men; and much as the greater number of them had ever been oppressed and insulted, still for centuries they had been respected for their scientific acquirements. Not only did they serve kings and rulers as ministers of finance and treasurers, as taxcollectors and stewards, — not only did they entertain lords and ladies in courts and in palaces with their songs

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and poetry, — but they were also the teachers and preceptors of kings and princes, yes, they — the Jews — were the guardians and propagators of knowledge in a Christian land.

When the Portuguese prince, Henry the Navigator, celebrated alike for his heroic conquests and his love for geography, turned his thoughts towards Africa, in order to discover the gold districts there, it was from the Jews that he obtained information concerning the places they had visited in their commercial journeys, and every Jewish traveller was sure to find an hospitable reception at Algarve, the country seat of this studious prince. It would be worse than ingratitude if, in recalling to mind the earliest discoveries of the Portuguese, we did not also remember the Jews, — the important communications they made and the advice they gave.

A long line of learned geographers sprang from the Portuguese nation; and the widely extended connections, which the new discoverers cemented with the people of Asia and Africa, could not but further the interests of science.

To the Portuguese, who have enriched the science of geography by their works, and who, on account of their travels, have been numbered among the „travellers of the world, belongs the name of *Pedro Teixeira,*" — a man whose memory we wish to revive by this sketch, and whose discoveries and reflections, as far as they relate to the Jews and their antiquities, shall be once more in our time brought before the world.

Even the name has a good sound, and is well known in geographical literature.[1]

Our *Pedro Teixeira*[2] belonged to one of those Portuguese Jewish families, who dared not openly avow their

[1] We will here only mention *Ludwig Teixeira* who in 1598 (1602) wrote a „*nueva Geografia y Hydrografia del Orbe.*" A *Pedro Teixeira* travelled along the whole Spanish coast of the Mediterranean Sea, and published a „*Descripcion de la costa de Espana.*" He died in the 70th year of the 17th century.

[2] Not Teireira, Teirera, Texera, as Wolff (according to Barrios) bibl.

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religion, or educate their children in the faith of their fathers. Many a youth of this race has only in receiving the last blessing of his dying father been informed of his true descent, and of the religion, to which his parents, from their inmost conviction, had remained faithful, and for which their forefathers had endured tortures and martyrdoms of every description. This legacy of the heart, if we may thus express ourselves, was willingly received by many; and many only rekindled the glimmering spark of love to Judaism in their hearts, when the time appeared drawing near when they would have to give an account to those belonging to them of what they had done and left undone with regard to the guardianship of the legacy bequeathed to them, and were about to rejoin those they had loved in another world.

Thus it was with our Pedro Teixeira.

Although born of Jewish parents, who in all probability resided in Lisbon, he was still not educated in the Jewish faith. Notwithstanding that submission to the will of the Almighty, which seemed to have been innate in him, and wich may be traced in almost every leaf of his book of travels, — notwithstanding his indwelling conviction that everything that happened or befel him, everything he received and enjoyed, proceeded from the hand of his Creator — a feeling, which may be more than once traced in Teixeira — we still think that we are able to infer from his narrative, that during a great part of his life — during his travels — even up to the period of his arrival in Antwerp, he was a Christian, and even a devout Catholic.

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hebr. III. 922, IV. 593 and Zunz in his excellent treatise „on the geographical literature of the Jews“ — in Asher's Edition of Benjamin of Tudela (Berlin 1840) II. 282, assert. — Many german-polish Jews often pronounce the syllable *ei* as *e*; and thus Spanish names like Teixeira, Morteira came to be read and written by them as Texera and Mortera. Besides this the aforesaid Barrios *(Triumpho del Gioverno Popular 10, 17)* calls him likewise Pedro Teyxeyra *(sic)*. The learned Thomas de Pinedo, the editor and commentator of Stephanus Byzantinus, frequently mentions our traveller in his commentary.

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It was at Antwerp, the oldest dutch settlement of the spanish-portuguese exiles, that Pedro settled himself after the termination of his journey. There he published his valuable work on the origin and order of succession of the kings of Persia and Harmez; there he wrote his „Travels from India to Italy“;[1] — and there, not at Verona,[2] most probably towards the middle of the 17th century he died in the Jewish faith, and was gathered to his fathers in a better world.

Without enlarging further on the above mentioned historical work of Teixeira, who, from his earliest youth, had devoted himself to the study of history, we will resume our notice for a time of the learned and celebrated traveller himself.

In September 1601 Pedro returned from his first long journey to the Philippine Isles, China and a portion of the New World, which had extended over a year and a half, and which he had undertaken, as he expressed himself, to pass the time and become acquainted with new countries. After a residence of two years and a half in Lisbon, he started for a second journey for scientific purposes to India, Persia and other countries. Teixeira was admirably fitted for such an undertaking by possessing the talent, not given to all travellers, of remarking everything worthy of note, and of intuitively understanding it. We will not here en-

1 The title of his work, which is now befor us, is: *„Relaciones de Pedro Teixeira d'el Origen, descendencia y succession de los Reyes de Persia y de Harmuz, y de un viage hecho por el mismo autor dende la India Oriental hasta Italia etc. Amberes Hieronymus Verdussen 1610.*

2 The Spanish poet Daniel Levi de Barrios — about him and his poems more in our forthcoming work: *„Romanische Poesien der Juden in Spanien“* — mentions Verona as the place of his death; comp. *Relacion de los Poetas Espanoles, 58: „Pedro Teireira (Teixeira) . . . . murio en Verona.“* So likewise Wolff I. c. III. 922; Zunz I. c.; Steinschneider „Jewish literature“ (London 1857) 258. — Barrios, a reliable authorithy, as long as he confines himself to speaking of persons and events of his own time, was not well informed on this point; and the statement respecting it of the Portuguese Biographer Barbosa certainly deserves more credence. Barbosa remarks in his Bibl. lusit. (Lisboa 1747) III. 622: *„Vizitou Veneza, donde por terra veyo a Anveres e nesta cidade fez o seu domicilio até a morte.“*

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deavour to ascertain if it was the ancient Jewish spirit which incited him to consider the Jewish relics of olden times as worthy of notice, or if from respect to the fathers of his race his enquiring eye sought out those sacred places where the remains of those belonging to his tribe reposed, or if this simple unprejudiced view only bears the higher stamp of the superiority of his scientific acquirements. Enough, Teixeira, in his travels and in his book of travels, thought of Jewish antiquities and of the Jews themselves; and for this his brethren in the faith are bound to feel grateful to him. That this „reliable Author", as Menasse ben Israel calls him,[1] gives his information from his own observation, and not from any descriptions made by the Jewish merchant of Tudela, scarcely needs mention. Benjamin's book of travels was certainly in print, and had passed through many editions in his time. Without however whishing to detract from Pedro's learning, we believe ourselves justified in asserting that to him Benjamin's writings would have been of little value, in as much as he did not understand Hebrew: and the first translation of this work, by the learned Benedictine Arias Montano, was unlikely to have been in his possession.

With the sincerest regret that our Portuguese traveller does not speak more explicitly of those of his pursuasion in Persia and India, we now take leave of him.[2]

Teixeira has understood his task; and the manner in which it has been accomplished has been fully acknowledged.

May the travellor of the 19th century likewise have cause to rejoice in the favour of his readers.

BERLIN. June 2nd 1858.

Dr. *M. Kayserling.*

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1 Spes Israelis c. 26.

2 Teixeira's notes of this journey, especially those relating the monuments of the Jews, and his accounts of his brethren in the faith, we have added in their proper places to our work. — The course of his journey was from India to Europe, consequently in a contrary direction to our own; and therefore it is that we have chosen this method of arrangement.

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CHAPTER I.

Departure from the Moldau. — Object of the journey. — Journal. — Tomb of the Rabbi Jacob bal Haturim. — Arrival at Jerusalem.

In Foltitscheny on the Moldau, where I reside, I used formerly to carry on an extensive trade in timber and other productions of the country. Being suddenly utterly ruined through the fault of my partners, I found myself compelled for my own sake, and more especially for the sake of my family, to enter on a new career under changed circumstances, and this was the ostensible cause of my wanderings in the East.

Added to these external circumstances there was a long and deeply cherished wish of my heart, a wish fostered from my earliest youth; and I determined therefore to make first a pilgrimage to those parts, where once my forefathers dwelt in the days of their glory and of their misfortune, and thus, as in a vision, search out the traces of what remained of the ten tribes of Israel.

I began my wanderings on the 5th of January 1845. — After visiting, as my private affairs compelled me to do, the principal towns of Austria, I proceeded through Turkey in Europe to Constantinople, where I embarked for Smyrna, wich place I reached without any occurrence worthy of remark.

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deavour to ascertain if it was the ancient Jewish spirit which incited him to consider the Jewish relics of olden times as worthy of notice, or if from respect to the fathers of his race his enquiring eye sought out those sacred places where the remains of those belonging to his tribe reposed, or if this simple unprejudiced view only bears the higher stamp of the superiority of his scientific acquirements. Enough, Teixeira, in his travels and in his book of travels, thought of Jewish antiquities and of the Jews themselves; and for this his brethren in the faith are bound to feel grateful to him. That this „reliable Author", as Menasse ben Israel calls him,[1] gives his information from his own observation, and not from any descriptions made by the Jewish merchant of Tudela, scarcely needs mention. Benjamin's book of travels was certainly in print, and had passed through many editions in his time. Without however whishing to detract from Pedro's learning, we believe ourselves justified in asserting that to him Benjamin's writings would have been of little value, in as much as he did not understand Hebrew: and the first translation of this work, by the learned Benedictine Arias Montano, was unlikely to have been in his possession.

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CHAPTER I.

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In Foltitscheny on the Moldau, where I reside, I used formerly to carry on an extensive trade in timber and other productions of the country. Being suddenly utterly ruined through the fault of my partners, I found myself compelled for my own sake, and more especially for the sake of my family, to enter on a new career under changed circumstances, and this was the ostensible cause of my wanderings in the East.

Added to these external circumstances there was a long and deeply cherished wish of my heart, a wish fostered from my earliest youth; and I determined therefore to make first a pilgrimage to those parts, where once my forefathers dwelt in the days of their glory and of their misfortune, and thus, as in a vision, search out the traces of what remained of the ten tribes of Israel.

I began my wanderings on the 5th of January 1845. — After visiting, as my private affairs compelled me to do, the principal towns of Austria, I proceeded through Turkey in Europe to Constantinople, where I embarked for Smyrna, wich place I reached without any occurrence worthy of remark.

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deavour to ascertain if it was the ancient Jewish spirit which incited him to consider the Jewish relics of olden times as worthy of notice, or if from respect to the fathers of his race his enquiring eye sought out those sacred places where the remains of those belonging to his tribe reposed, or if this simple unprejudiced view only bears the higher stamp of the superiority of his scientific acquirements. Enough, Teixeira, in his travels and in his book of travels, thought of Jewish antiquities and of the Jews themselves; and for this his brethren in the faith are bound to feel grateful to him. That this „reliable Author", as Menasse ben Israel calls him,[1] gives his information from his own observation, and not from any descriptions made by the Jewish merchant of Tudela, scarcely needs mention. Benjamin's book of travels was certainly in print, and had passed through many editions in his time. Without however whishing to detract from Pedro's learning, we believe ourselves justified in asserting that to him Benjamin's writings would have been of little value, in as much as he did not understand Hebrew: and the first translation of this work, by the learned Benedictine Arias Montano, was unlikely to have been in his possession.

With the sincerest regret that our Portuguese traveller does not speak more explicitly of those of his pursuasion in Persia and India, we now take leave of him.[2]

Teixeira has understood his task; and the manner in which it has been accomplished has been fully acknowledged.

May the travellor of the 19th century likewise have cause to rejoice in the favour of his readers.

BERLIN. June 2nd 1858.

Dr. *M. Kayserling.*

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1 Spes Israelis c. 26.

2 Teixeira's notes of this journey, especially those relating the monuments of the Jews, and his accounts of his brethren in the faith, we have added in their proper places to our work. — The course of his journey was from India to Europe, consequently in a contrary direction to our own; and therefore it is that we have chosen this method of arrangement.

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After a voyage of 12 hours I arrived at the small town of Sakis, which is surrounded by lovely pomegranate and citron groves. At the extreme end of the town is the tomb of the Rabbi Jacob bal Haturim,[1] son of the Rabbi Ascher ben Jechiel. The tomb, which is of a round form, is covered over by a small tiled roof; the mausoleum itself is enclosed in a building, and the whole surrounded by a wall. Near the entrance rest the remains of the Meschoreth (servant) of the Rabbi. At different seasons of the year the Jews make a pilgrimage to this tomb. Sakis carries on a very good trade in pomegranates and citrons with Austria and Russia.

Having returned to Smyrna I resumed my journey on horseback, in company with some Turks, and arrived at Menessia fifteen hours' journey north of Smyrna. I was indebted to my European dress and to the Consuls residing at Smyrna that during this journey I did not suffer from that molestation, to which, on account of the hostile feelings of the natives towards Europeans, to whom they barely pay respect, travellers are repeatedly exposed.

Six hours' journey to the southeast of Menessia lies the town of Casiba, the principal source of commerce of which consists in cotton and raisins. These rich productions are cultivated to a great extent, and exported by Jewish merchants to Constantinople and other parts.

After travelling for three successive days through a smiling landscape, planted with olive trees, and enlivened by cheerful villages, the inhabitants of which employ themselves in the preparation and sale of olive oil, I reached a

[1] The Seder Hadaroth (Fol. 48, p. 2) and the Schem Hagdolim (Wilna 1852. Fol. 42, p. 2) relate that the abovementioned Rabbi died on a pilgrimage to Palestine, a day's journey from Smyrna; and they mention Kiaw, not Sakis, as the place of his burial. In the book „Abne Sikaron" (c. 7) it is asserted on the contrary, that he died in Spain, and was buried by the side of his father in Tultila (Toledo); and a sketch of his tombstone is likewise added. We annex all these reports or notions to our narrative of the above tradition without further observation.

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town called Tirje. In three days and a half more, after passing through a long row of luxurious vegetable gardens and vineyards, intermixed with fig trees picturesquely scattered, I came to the sea-port of Couschadassi, lying to the northeast of Tirje. It carries on but a small trade. — Here, as in all the other places above mentioned, reside Jews.

Upon an island lies Stankoy,[1] for which place I embarked from Couschadassi, and reached it in about 18 hours. The town is surrounded by beautiful gardens, planted with orange and lemon trees, the fruit of which is sold in Turkey and elsewhere. Fifteen hours further on, at the foot of a high mountain, lies the town and harbour of Sima.[2] The lower part of the town is washed by the sea, and the other part is built on the ascent of the mountain, and here the European Consuls reside. — The neighbourhood is rocky, and is not built over; and there is also a scarcity of spring water in the town. The inhabitants carry on a trade in sponge and fish; the latter of which there is an abundant supply, and not an inconsiderable quantity of salted fish is exported to distant parts.

I left Sima in a small coasting vessel, and, after a voyage of 36 hours, reached the celebrated town of Rhodes,[3] situated on the island of the same name.

Rhodes, an ancient and farfamed fortress, carries on a considerable trade. The population is much mixed; Christians, Turks, Armenians, Jews and Greeks alike dwell there. The Consuls of the European powers occupy a certain quarter, wich is surrounded by a fortified wall. The Jews in the Turkish quarter live together in families, and Christians are forbidden to enter this part of the town during the night. After staying several days in Rhodes, I embarked for

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1 Twenty hours by sea, to the north of Couschadassi.

2 Benjamin of Tudela (A. Asher's edition, Berlin and London 1840, A. Asher) speaks (p. 25) likewise of Sima, where he found 300 Jews. Translator's note. By an hour's journey is intended to be signified a distance of 3 miles or thereabouts. We state this once for all.

3 Benjamin de Tudela p. 25.

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Alexandria, for the purpose of proceeding thence to Cairo.

My journey through Egypt I shall annex to the narrative of my journey in Africa, and will only confine myself to the remark that I travelled by sea from Damietta to Jaffa (the ancient Joppa of the Hebrews), and thence proceeded on my journey towards Jerusalem.

On the 7th June 1847 I arrived at Alexandria, remained there several days, travelled thence to Cairo, from wich place I proceeded by the Nile to Damietta, wich I reached on the 20th July. After a sojourn of a few days there, I embarked for Jaffa; in which place I had to keep quarantine for 10 days. The distance from Jaffa to Jerusalem is a journey of only 12 hours. The journey over Lud I performed on a Camel, and on Friday, August 14th, at 8 o'clock in the morning, I perceived the Holy City of Jerusalem, the goal of my ardent desires.

CHAPTER II.

Jerusalem.[1]

View of the City. — Its foundation. — Gates. — Ruins of the Temple. — Tradition of the Sultan Soliman. — Grotto of King Hiskia.

„How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel!“[2] — With these words in my mind I set foot upon the sacred soil of Jerusalem. How it lies there before me, that once mighty and majestic City! The sight

[1] The Arabians and Turks call Jerusalem „Kodesch“, the Chaldeans and Persians „Beth-el-Mickdasch“.

[2] Numbers. c. XXIV. 5. (The quotations are always after the hebrew bible.)

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overpowered me; and, at the remembrance of all the great and noble deeds of those days, when my people, the chosen of the Lord, dwelt there in all the fullness of their might and power, — feelings of the purest pride and joy for the past, of the deepest sorrow for the present, and the brightest and most trusting hope for the future, passed through my heart, and awakened in me the warmest gratitude. Tears filled my eyes, and I prostrated myself and pressed my lips to the sacred soil of Zion, in acknowledgment of the mercy which the Lord God of Sabaoth had shown me: for He it was who had protected me in the trackless wilderness, and with His right hand had guided me through the deserts of Asia and Africa, and over the waves of the mighty ocean unto His own dwelling place, unto the seat of His glory, where He reigns supreme, and is adored in the holiness of His power; where His sanctuary extends its splendor far over the universe in the eternal glory of the Holy Faith. — With what veneration did I fall down and pray on entering thy gates, O Jerusalem!

There thou art, before my eyes, thou holy city, whose name fills the universe, — who, in the dreams of my youth, as I perused the holy Scriptures, wert ever hovering before my mind's eye, in all the brightness of prosperity and glory. How deep, how great is thy fall, thou beloved city of the Eternal One, — thou Crown of Cities, — thou Queen of Nations! — With what fearful accuracy have the prophecies and denunciations of thy Prophets been fulfilled on thee! „If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, may my right hand forget her cunning; if I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy!“ [1]

The foundation of Jerusalem is assigned to Shem the son of Noah,[2] who began to build the walls of the city. Its earliest name was Salem,[3] but after the proposed sacrifice

[1] Psalm CXXXVII. 5. 6.

[2] Seder Hadoroth. Fol. 12, p. 2.

[3] Genesis. c. XIV. 18.

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of Isaac by his father, Abraham called the place „Yirre“, whence originated the name Jerusalem.[1] — Thus for such a length of time was this city the residence of princes! — Five and twenty years after the liberation of the Israelites from the Egyptian captivity, the City was governed by King Jebusee, the successor of Abimeleck: he completed the walls, and erected a fortress, which he called Jebus.[2] It was not until the reign of David, who came with an army against Jerusalem and the Jebusites, that the Jews succeeded in gaining possession of this stronghold.[3] The building of the Temple, which lasted 7 years, was commenced by Solomon, 480 years after the departure of the Children of Israel from the land of Egypt.[4]

The destruction of the Temple, the fate of the Jews after their first dispersion, the rebuilding and destruction of the second Temple, as well as the last and entire dispersion of the Children of Israel, are too generally known to require that I should dwell longer on the relation of them. I will only mention one fact; — namely, that several monarchs and one caliph have made the attempt to raise the Temple from its ruins, and could not succeed. The prophecy of the Royal Psalmist is fulfilled: „Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.“[5]

The Antiquities of Jerusalem are also well known; of the gates of the city however I will say a little. Jerusalem has six gates,[6] — five of which are open, and one closed. They are called thus: 1) towards the east, the Gate of Lions;

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1 Midrasch Raba c. 56.

2 Judges. c. XIX. 10. 11. — Seder Hadoroth. Fol. 9, p. 26. — Joshua c. XV. 8.

3 II. Chronicles. c. V. 6. 7.

4 I. Kings. VI. 1.

5 Psalm. CXXVII. 1.

6 Benjamin de Tudela, p. 36, mentions only four gates, to some of which he gives other names.

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so called from the images sculptured on the wall; its arabic name is Bab-el-Schebat. 2) To the north, the Gate of Sichem; in arabic called Bab-el-Amoud. 3) Between these two is the gate which is closed. 4) To the West, the Gate of Hebron, now called the Gate of Joffa; in arabic, Bab-el-Chalil. 5) To the south the Gate of Zion; in arabic, Bab-el-Dahoud (the Gate of David). And lastly 6) on the same side the smallest of all, Bab-el-Maghra-bim (Gate of the Arabs); because the Arabs who come from the West, from Morocco &c. enter here, and dwell in the adjacent streets.

Concerning the ancient buildings of the Holy City I will only repeat the words of the celebrated and learned Munk of Paris, who said: „There is not a stone in Jerusalem which is not known, and has not been described, and has not deserved it.“

The Seder Hadoroth informs us that the celebrated scholar Rabbi Jehuda Halevy, author of the book „Cusri“, in his 50th year, somewhere about the year 4920, undertook a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and in deep sorrow prostrated himself to kiss each stone. In pious enthusiasm he gave utterance to a song of lamentation, which commenced with the word „Zion.“ It is to be found in the 31st Chap., and is up to the present time sung by the Jews of the German church, on the anniversary of the destruction of Jerusalem. — A fanatic Arab, who saw and heard the pious Rabbi, rode upon him in a rage, and the inspired singer perished under the hoofs of his horse.

The Temple.

I begin the description of my pious pilgrimage through the Holy City with the venerable ruins of the Temple, which have braved thousands of years, and are therefore certainly entitled to the first place in our notice.

A tradition, universally known to those of my faith

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After this the Sultan summoned the Jews before him, and addressed them with the following consolatary words: „Acting on an inspiration from above I have done what you have seen. Through me shall the Temple rise again in fresh splendor, for I also am called Soliman, like the first founder of this Sanctuary. But as this place is your property, it is for you to complete and restore the building, for which purpose I offer you the means.“ — On hearing these words these unhappy Jews wept and remained silent. — But Soliman asked: „Why weep ye? — Rejoice rather, for your God has not forgotten you.“ — An old man then approached the Sultan and said: „May thy life be long upon the earth, O gracious Sultan. We will praise the Almighty for having given to thee such benevolent thoughts, and the wish to restore to us our Temple, our only glory and pride. But according to the Scriptures, we are forbidden to erect the Temple ourselves; God alone can do this.“ [1]

„What, ye will not build up the Temple again!“ cried the Sultan; „yet Solomon, in his prayer of the consecration of this sanctuary said: „Moreover concerning a stranger, who is not of Thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far country for Thy name's sake. For they shall hear of Thy great name, and of Thy strong hand, and of Thy stretched out arm, when he shall come and pray toward this house. Hear Thou in Heaven Thy dwelling place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to Thee for!“ [2] — I myself will rebuild the Temple of the Lord, and to Him alone shall it be dedicated.“

Soliman caused the plan of the first Temple to be given to him, in order that he might erect the third in accordance with it; an undertaking which however remained unper-

[1] The last words of the old man refer to the Song of Solomon c. 11, 7. — Midrasch Rabba. Fol. 11, p. 1. According to my view one sees in Talmud Jeruschalmi, Messechet Maassir Scheni chap. 5, v. 2. that the third Temple shall be built as the second was; and that the monarchs favorable to the Jewish nation, shall erect this Temple.

[2] I. Kings. c. VIII. 41—43.

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formed. Under his reign the Jews enjoyed the same privileges as the rest of his subjects, and lived happily.

I have thought the above tradition worth relating only so far, as it shows how much faith and hope for a brighter future still animate the hearts of my people.[1]

On the east side of Jerusalem, opposite to the side of the Mount of Olives, lies the site of the Temple, to the southeast of the present town.

To the north and the west are those large buildings, which touch the western wall (Cothel Maaravi), and surround the site on all sides. The Jews of Jerusalem perform their evening devotions near this spot each Friday afternoon and on the eves of their high festivals; but no one dares to tread on the inner part, which is strictly guarded by the Turks. On the site of the Holy of Holies stands a splendid building erected by Solomon, dedicated to the religious solemnities of the Mussulman. It is said that there is here to be found a cave; the contents of which are unknown however, to this day. The Jews assert that the sacred coffer of relics is concealed here.[2] The first Turkish rulers wished to have it examined; but when persons sent for that purpose attempted to enter, they were struck dead; and so all further researches have ceased.

The Medrass of Solomon, a building erected by that king, is the spot, where, according to tradition, the Jews established the Sanhedrin (or high Court of Justice). To this place there are two entrances; one to the north, the other to the west; the southern side is distinguished by numerous windows. The way from this building to the Temple is through an avenue of trees, surrounded by a moat. The Arabians tread this path with bare feet; as they consider the soil sacred; and to this spot they bring their dead previous to interment, in order to protect them from

[1] This tradition I likewise found in „Chibath Jerusalem“ (which appeared in 5604 in Jerusalem); probably likewise related as tradition.

[2] Messechet Juma p. 54.

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the judgments of God. — To the west of the Temple is a trench, which is called by the Arabians Bir-el-dam (or trench of blood; they believe that in that trench was poured the blood of the burnt offerings. Beside this trench, as tradition goes on to say, Nebusaradan, a captain of Nebuchadnezzar, caused many children, Jewish mothers and priests to be massacred, in order to avenge the innocent blood of Zachariah, son of the Priest Jehoiada.

Outside the city, but still within the walls surrounding it, is a cave, excavated by command of King Hiskia. It is related that Zedekiah, the last King of Judah, escaped through it, in order to avoid falling into the hands of the Chaldeans. This cave is near the gate Bab-el-Amoud, and, according to the assertion of some Jews, it is said to be large enough to contain a man on horseback. They say also that in it is a square room hewn out of stone, which was intended for a Synagogue; and in the wall of this room was embedded a written roll of the Pentateuch; but any search there is forbidden. Through a cleft in the rock, which time had caused, I could perceive something of the interior of this cave.

At the foot of the Mount of Olives, opposite to the Temple, is the tomb, surrounded by a wall, of Mary, the Mother of Christ.

In the city of Jerusalem is the Sepulchre of Christ;[1] to which a great multitude of Christian pilgrims from all nations of the world resort. At Easter particularly the streets of the city are thronged with wayfarers. — As an especial sign of the intolerance of the 19th century, I will only add that no Jew, at the peril of his life, dare venture to tread the pathways leading to the Church of the Sepulchre.

Every Friday forenoon at 11 o'clock, the Sheik with several of his officers proceeds, amid chanting of prayers, from the Mosque of Zion through the city to the site of the Temple, where he performs divine service, which lasts an

[1] Benjamin de Tudela, p. 35, mentions this tomb.

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hour; during which time the several gates of Jerusalem are strictly closed.

Jerusalem, once so flourishing and prosperous, then for a long time demolished and desolate, is now inhabited by people of all climes. In my last chapter on Palestine I shall speak of them more particularly.

We hope however that as all the words of the Lord to Solomon and the Prophets have been fulfilled, so, one day the prophecies of Isaiah (c. 11, 2) concerning Jerusalem and her future destiny may likewise be accomplished.

CHAPTER III.

Zion.

On Mount Zion stands an ancient building, under which is to be found the entrance to a cave, which is said to extend to the interior of the City of Jerusalem, where a large stone denotes the place of outlet. The cave is said to contain the tombs of several Kings of the house of David. In the building above the cave the Mahomedan pilgrims perform their devotions. Sometimes permission is also given to the Jews to pray at the spot, supposed to contain the remains of their departed kings; for which permission they pay the tribute of 1 piastre.

In the year 4915 (1155), so it is related,[1] a Bishop endeavoured to remove stones from this sacred place, in order to repair a delapidated church with them.

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[1] Benjamin de Tudela, p. 38 and 39, relates this circumstance, with some triffling alterations.

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One day two of the labourers engaged there did not come to work at the appointed time; and the overseer ordered them to make up this loss of time in their leisure hours. While digging, these two men discovered a large slab of marble, which, on account of its weight, they could scarcely move from its place. But after much exertion they succeeded in doing so, and found under it the entrance to a large cave. Full of curiosity they wished to enter it, but by a strong gust of wind they were violently thrown to the ground, and were found by their fellow workmen in a state of unconsciousness. The Bishop, to whom this event was immediately made known, caused the two men to be brought before him, and ascertained from them that in this case they had perceived two tables of gold, upon which a crown, sceptre, sword, and other insignia of royalty were displayed, but that they had not been able to penetrate into the cave itself; but had sunk down unconscious at the entrance of it. The Bishop after that ordered the cave to be walled up again. — The Josiphun, which Israelites ascribe to Flavius Josephus, asserts that there Solomon concealed his treasures. Hircan and Herod the Great took possession of the tombs of the Kings of Judah, and appropriated a large portion of the treasures to their own use.

At the foot of Mount Zion lies a valley, whence one ascends to another mount, on which is to be seen a house hewn out of the rock. Over the entrance of it is an illegible inscription, which, according to the assertion of the Jews, contains the following words: „This building was erected in the reign of our King Solomon.“

Har Hassethim (the Mount of Olives) lies to the east of the town; from which it is separated by the valley of Josophat. An extensive view is to be had from the top of this mountain; Jerusalem, the site of the Temple, the Jordan, the Dead Sea, the Mountains of Gerizim and Ebal, can all be seen from it. On the mountain itself is a small village, and about half an hour's journey from it, in a cave,

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is to be found the tomb of the Prophetess Huldah,[1] of whom mention is made in the Bible.[2]

Further down, towards the town, mid way up the mountain, is another cave, consisting of several divisions, containing the tombs of the Prophets Haggai, Zachariah and Malachi, which are frequently visited by the Jews. At the base of the mountain is a Jewish place of burial, and here, according to tradition, is the tomb of Zachariah, son of the Priest Jehoida,[3] as well as the house Bethachaphschith, in which King Uzziah was confined when struck with leprosy.[4]

Chazzar Hamathara (the place of prison),[5] lies to the north of the city; in it is a very deep dungeon, which can only be reached with much difficulty. According to tradition Jeremiah was kept a prisoner in it by command of the King of Judah. The courtyard of the prison contains several small houses and rooms hewn out of stone, which were used as places of confinement. Several old buildings on this place are said, by the people dwelling there, to cover the tombs of the Prophets Jeremiah and Isaiah; of which however, after a careful search, I could find no traces.

To the north of the city rises a grand cluster of rocks beside a courtyard, to which the entrance is on the south side. Two trees raise their branches over it on high, one a date tree and the other a tree bearing a fruit which they call tuth. Here again is to be found an extensive cave divided into several compartments. On entering there is a large room first, which leads to two smaller ones; these again conduct to a still larger apartment, followed again by

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1 The Talmud contradicts this assertion; for it mentions that she was buried near the walls of the town. Tosephta Baba chap. 1, and Messechet Simachot chap. 14. Altogether the writer himself believes that it requires much careful research to ascertain if *other graves* likewise are really in the places, where they are believed to be.

2 II. Kings. c. XXII. 14. — II. Chronicles. c. XXXIV. 22.

3 II. Chronicles. c. XXIV. 20. 21.

4 II. Kings. c. XV. 5.

5 Jeremiah. c. XXXVIII. 13.

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two smaller ones. In a small room towards the north a tomb stone covers the place, where, according to tradition, rest the ashes of one of the richest men of Jerusalem, Calbe Schewua, who lived in the days of the second Temple. Many wonders are related which are said to have taken place here. — During my stay at Jerusalem in 1847 in the month of Ellul, the Pacha caused numerous excavations to be made, for the purpose of discovering a treasure which was supposed to be buried here. — On account of their extraordinary size, these rocky buildings attract the peculiar attention of travellers.

An hours' journey further on, to the north of the city, is another cave containing three separate adjoining rooms. In the first of these rooms bubbles a spring of water, which is sometimes dried up. The second contains two tombs, and in the third is the tomb of Simon ha Zadik (the Just), the last member of the Kenesseth-Hagdola (Great Assembly),[1] which was originally summoned by Esra. The two tombs in the second room are those of the sons of Simon. — Half an hour's journey distant from this spot is another cave divided into four parts; of which one is to the right, an other to the left, and the remaining two are underground. Here are said to rest the remains of the celebrated men of the Sanhedrin.

Rama. Two hours' journey to the north west of Jerusalem is a mountain, on which, in a grotto, is shewn the tomb of the Prophet Samuel,[2] and to the right of it is the tomb of his parents. Descending the mountain one arrives at a smaller grotto, from which flows a murmuring stream; they say that this was the bath of Hannah, the mother of Samuel. The Jews, as well as other inhabitants of the country, make pilgrimages to this spot, which, in Arabic, is called Ziara; and they pay a piastre for permission to enter.

Two hours' journey to the south of Jerusalem, on the

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[1] Messechet Awoth. chap. 1. — Mischna. 1.

[2] I. Samuel. c. XXV. 1.

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road towards Hebron, stands a small fortress called Barak; beside the gate of which are three tanks for the reception and preservation of rain water. Near this fortress, beside a spring, stands a house, said to have been built by King Solomon. — A mile and a half further to the south[1] is the tomb of Rachel. As Benjamin of Tudela[2] relates, several monuments have been erected over this tomb; of which the first consists of a dome, supported by eleven columns.[3] Mahomet Pacha had another erected in the year 5385; and the present one is indebted to the piety of Sir Moses Montefiore. The Jews often make pilgrimages to this tomb of their ancestress; and particulary on the 15th of Cheswan (November), the anniversary of Rachel's death; when many go there to perform their devotions.

Two hours' journey from Hebron lies the village Halhul, where are the tombs of the Prophets Nathan and Gad. This village bears to this day its ancient biblical name.[4]

Half an hour's journey from Hebron is shewn the foundation of a house, in which it is said Abraham once dwelt. At the side of it is likewise shewn a spring, which is called Sarah's Well; supposed to have been the bath of Sarah; many Jewesses make use of it to this day.[5] It was told

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1 Genesis. c. XLVIII. 7. XXXV. 19.

2 Benjamin of Tudela p. 40.

3 Rabbi Pethachia (p. 196) likewise speaks of the tomb of Rachel, which is formed of eleven stones, according to the eleven tribes. *Adiit porro sepulchrum Rachelis in Ephrata, quae dimidii diei itinere Hierosolymis distat, illis monumento undecim lapides impositi sunt, secundum numerum undecim Tribunum etc.*

4 Joshua. c. XV. 58.

5 Benjamin de Tudela (p. 42): In his time a house stood there of which however now only the foundations of the walls are to be seen. — He speaks likewise of a spring, but does not give its name. — Rabbi Pethachia (p. 199) who also mentions this spring, calls it by the above name.

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tree, that the Arabs in the neighbourhood, a few years since, hewed down the tree,[1] under wich Abraham sat when the angels appeared to him.[2]

CHAPTER IV.

Hebron (called by the Arabs Chalil).

Foundation of the town. — Grotto and tombs of the Patriarchs. — Three other grottoes.

Hebron, formerly called Kiriath Arba,[3] was, at the time of the conquest of the promised land by Joshua, the capital of a small kingdom.[4] According to tradition, a family of giants dwell there, consisting of four persons: a father and three sons. The ruler of the country called himself Arba.[5] The Talmud (Eruben p. 53) explains the name of Kiriath Arba by the fact that four couples were buried there; viz. Adam and Eve, Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, Jacob and Leah, for the Hebrew word „*Arba*“ signifies „*four*“.

The Seder Hadoroth (p. 11) informs us that Hebron was founded at the time of the dispersion of men at the building of the tower of Babel. The Bible likewise assigns the foundation of the city to the most remote period.[6] It stood formerly upon a hill, where travellers can find ruins to this day.[7] The newly built city is raised around

1 Rabbi Pethachia (p. 199) speaks of this tree.
2 Genesis. c. XVIII. 4.
3 Judges. c. I. 10.
4 Joshua. c. X. 111.
5 Joshua. c. XIV. 15, according to Abarbanel's explanation.
6 Numbers. c. XIII. 22.
7 Benjamin de Tudela (p. 40) likewise mentions these ruins.

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the cave, called by the Arabs Halil Machpelo, which is situated in the street called Rachman. The Bible mentions that Hebron was formerly surrounded by vineyards; and to this day there are still many to be seen there; for the neighbouring Arabs devote much attention to the cultivation of the vine.

Above the cave stands a magnificent building, the first stone of which, according to tradition, was laid by King Solomon himself. Esther, Queen of Persia, is said to have restored this building; and the Empress Helena had it put into the same state in which it remains to this day. — For its especial preservation the cave is again surrounded by a wall. Within it are two Mosques; of which the one over the grave of Abraham bears the name of *St. Abraham;* and the other over the grave of Jacob, the name of *St. Jacob.* The permission to visit these Mosques, which are held in the highest veneration by the Turks, is given to no unbeliever.[1] In the year 1833 however a Jewish merchant from Russia, named Schemerl Arlick, succeeded, by means of making great presents to the Scheik, in obtaining leave to visit the Mosque over the grotto, in the latter half of the night. According to his assertion, the interior is decorated with the greatest splendor; illuminated by innumerable lights, which are again reflected with magic brilliancy in the gold and silver ornaments. Through two windows in the floor of the Mosque one looks down into the grotto. At break of day the visitor, notwithstanding his disguise in the garb of a Turkish priest, was obliged to withdraw for fear of being recognised.[2]

Outside the city, in the direction of Jerusalem, are three wells; which, according to the Bible, were dug by Abraham. On leaving the Sepulchre of the Patriarchs, and proceeding

[1] Near the entrance to the Mosque of St. Abraham a particular place is set apart, where Jews and Christians are allowed te perform their devotions.

[2] Rabbi Pethachia (p. 197. 198) mentions this cave; he gained access to it.

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on the road leading to the Jewish quarter, to the left of the courtyard, is seen a Turkish dwelling house, by the side of which is a small grotto, to which there is a descent of several steps. This is the tomb of Abner, captain of King Saul.[1] It is held in much esteem by the Arabs, and the proprietor of it takes care that it is always kept in the best order. He requires from those who visit it a small gratuity.

Likewise outside the city, towards the south, in a vineyard, which was purchased by the Jews, are the graves of the father of King David and of the first Judge, Othniel, the son of Kinah.

CHAPTER V.

Sichem. Samaria. Zephath. Miron.

An hour's journey to the east of Sichem[2] near the village Ablanuta, is the tomb of Joseph and of his two sons Ephraim and Manasseh.[3] The graves are in the field which Jacob bought of the King of Sichem, near which flows a spring called „Jacob"; by the Arabs also similarly named, Beeïr Jacob (Jacob's Spring).[4]

As Midrasch Rabba (book 1, chap. 100) relates, the children of Israel on their departure from Egypt took the

[1] II. Samuel. c. III. 32; c. IV. 1.

[2] Abbé Bargés, Professor at the Sorbonne at Paris, who in the year 1853 visited the Holy Land, has given, in an episode of his journey, under the title of *„Les Samaritains de Naplouse"* (Paris 1855), some very clever and clear accounts respecting the ancient city of Sichem, the Samaritans, their worship, and their language, — which are, and especially with regard to the latter, — of the greatest value.

[3] Joshua. c. XXIV. 32.

[4] Compare Bargés *„Les Samaritains de Naplouse"* p. 10. 11.

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mortal remains of the ancestors of their race in coffins with them; and, after the division of the promised land, by Joshua, buried each in that portion of land which had fallen to the lot of his posterity. The writer, who has visited these spots, is convinced that this tradition is founded on truth, and using the authority of Midrasch Rabba as a guide, gives here the account relative to the tombs of the twelve Fathers of the Tribe, relying on the statement of Seder Olam Zuta (little Seder Olam) with respect to their ages.

1) Reuben, lived 124 years, and was buried in Rumia on the further side of the Jordan.
2) Gad, 125 years; buried at the same place as Reuben.
3) Simeon, 120 years; his grave is in the village Manda.
4) Levi, 134 years; buried in the same place.
5) Judah, 129 years; buried in the village Babi near Bethlehem.
6) Isachar, 122 years; lies buried at Sidon.
7) Zebulon, 124 years; lies there also.
8) Dan, 127 years; interred in the country of Astael.
9) Napthali, 132 years; interred in Kadesch-Napthali.
10) Asher, 126 years; rests in the land inherited by his posterity.
11) Joseph,[1] 110 years; as above mentioned.
12) Benjamin, 111 years; in the neighbourhood of Zion (Jebussi, the ancient name for Zion); the exact spot unknown.

The order of the names does not agree with the scripture account, but they are mentioned according to the order of their graves, of wich some are to this day distinguished by monuments, which are held in high veneration by the Turks.

To the north of Sichem, about four hours' journey from it, lies the place Dothan,[2] and near it is a tank or cistern,

[1] Genesis. c. L. 26.
[2] Genesis. c. XXXVII. 17.

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a Well, according to tradition, the sons of Jacob cast their brother Joseph.[1] This spot is called by the Arabs Gub Yusef, and consists of it a Mosque and a Funduk (or inn) have been erected.

A Sanjack likewise called Sabdia, wich, according to the Scripture, is the once celebrated city Somron, is situated in different parts, the graves of several of the Kings of Israel.

Two days and a half's journey from Sichem is the town Tiberias, which by some of the Talmudists is called Rakkath by reason Hammath (hot waters);[2] in the Bible both names are to be found.[3] According to the Talmud the city was formerly a most important one.[4] In the vicinity of Tiberias are numerous graves of Talmudists. — In the year 5591 Tiberias and Zephath were laid waste by an earthquake. But the most dreadful misfortune happened to them on the 5th of Sivan 1834, which may in truth be called a day of mourning in the history of Palestine. The Druses of Lebanon invaded the city of Zephath and plundered it for the space of 33 days; the Synagogues were destroyed, and the Tables of the Law demolished. The words of the Prophet Jeremiah were fulfilled.[5] The Jews had fled for refuge to the mountains. — The inhabitants of Tiberias, meeting a similar fate, sent a deputation to the plunderers, and purchased their forbearance by a sum of money.

By the earthquake of 1837, Tiberias and Zephath were almost entirely destroyed. Many hundred Jews and a great number of Mahomedans perished by it; few only were able to flee for safety to the mountains, and these spent there a night full of fear and horror, listening to the distant cries

1 Genesis. c. XXXVII. 24.
2 Massechet Megila. Fol. 5, p. 2; Fol. 8, p. 1.
3 Joshua. c. XIX. 35.
4 Massechet Berachot c. 1.
5 Jeremiah. c. XIV. 17.

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of pain and anguish of those who belonged to them; but whom they were unable to assist. On the next day they ventured to the scene of misfortune, which presented to them a fearful aspect. Under the earth and ruins of the city lay the horribly mutilated bodies of their relations and friends; few only were brought out still living, and these were mostly so disfigured that they envied the fate of the dead. Not a family was there that had not to deplore the loss of one of its members. But still no murmuring was to be heard; submissive and resigned to the dispensations of the Almighty, they said: „The Lord gave; the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord.“ [1]

Zephath lies at the foot of a mountain, and is now only a heap of ruins, from among which rise some houses and works of fortification. At the base of the mountain is a large cave, called by the Arabs Maarath Jacob; where it is said Jacob mourned over the loss of his son. To the south west of this mountain is another cave and a spring, which latter is called Aolad Jacob (Jacob's children). In the vicinity are to be found the graves of several Talmudists; and in the burial place of the Jews, near the town, are shewn the tombs of the Prophet Hosea and of his father Beeri; both the tombs are ornamented with a grave stone.

Two hours' journey from Zephath lies the village Mirom, and half an hours' journey further is to be seen an extensive courtyard surrounded by a wall, on which beside a magnificent tree stands an ancient building. It contains one large chamber and two smaller ones, in one of which is the tomb of the celebrated Talmudist Rabbi Simon, son of Jochais,[2] and the other that of his son, the Rabbi Eleazar. Generally on the 18th of Ijar (May), a great solemnity takes place there. Many thousands of Jewish pilgrims from Palestine, Syria, Persia, Africa, and other distant lands arrive several days

[1] Iob. c. I. 21.

[2] Benjamin de Tudela (p. 45) speaks of this village and of several tombs of the Talmudists found in the vicinity: of the above named tomb however he makes no mention.

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before the festival and encamp in tents round about, while the Rabbis take possession of the tomb-house and the neighbouring buildings. Divine service, which begins in the night of the 17th — 18th of Ijar, commences with the reading aloud of the work Sohar, which is ascribed to the Rabbi Simon. In the middle of the night they give utterance to their songs of praise and the rejoicing becomes so vehement that they even break out into dancing, and continue it until break of day. In every part of the court these ceremonies may be seen and heard, and they are repeated in the open air at the graves of the various Talmudists who are interred near by. The day appointed for this festival is the 18th of Ijar, the anniversary of the death of the Rabbi Simon. To add to the grandeur of it an immense number of lamps is lighted, and for this purpose a colossal lamp has been put up in the first apartment of the house; this lamp is capable of containing about 100 measures of oil. The lighting of this lamp, which is called Hadlaka di Rabbi Simon, is considered a peculiar privilege, which is even sold to the highest bidder. The lighting by means of the smaller lamps is called Hadlaka di Rabbi Eleazer. Many rich people even give their dresses ornamented with gold to serve as wicks for the great lamp; so highly venerated is the memory of Rabbi Simon. — On receiving the benediction which is bestowed by the Rabbi presiding over the ceremony, each person present hastens to present an offering, oftentimes of considerable value, — intended for the Portuguese Congregation of Zephath, and serves chiefly to keep the building in proper repair.

These ceremonies are called Hilloula di Rabbi Simon (wedding feasts of Rabbi Simon),[1] but I cannot relate the tradition which has given rise to them. I have not done so in my account of this festival, which is held in such high estimation in Asia, Africa, and even among the Turks. I

[1] This appellation is generally given by all the eastern pilgrims; who say, that when the Rabbi died, Heaven rejoiced.

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have confined myself to the simple facts alone; the several parts of which would fournish matter for a whole book, if one took into consideration the very copious traditions concerning it.[1]

CHAPTER VI.

The state of the Jews in Palestine.

Deep misery and continual oppression are the right words to describe the condition of the Children of Israel in the land of their fathers. — I comprise a short and faithful picture of their actual state under the following heads.

1) They are entirely destitute of every legal protection and every means of safety. Instead of the security afforded by the law, which is unknown in these countries, they are solely under the orders of the Scheiks and Pachas, men, whose character and feelings inspire but little confidence from the beginning. It is only the European Consuls who frequently take care of the oppressed, and give them some protection.

2) With unheard of rapacity tax upon tax is levied on them. With the exception of Jerusalem, every where else the taxes demanded are arbitrary. Whole communities have been impoverished by the exorbitant claims of the Scheiks, who, under the most trifling pretences, without any control, oppress the Jews with fresh burthens. It is impossible to enumerate all these oppressions.

3) In the strict sense of the word they are not even masters of their own property. They do not even venture

[1] In Tunis, in the same night, just such a festival is held, with similar ceremonies.

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to complain when they are robbed and plundered; for the vengeance of the Arabs would follow each complaint.

4) Their lives are taken into as little consideration as their property; they are exposed to the caprice of any one; for even the smallest pretext, even a harmless discussion, a word dropped in conversation, is enough to cause bloody reprisals. Violence of every kind is of daily occurrence. When, for instance in the contests of Mahomet Ali with the Sublime Porte, the City of Hebron was besieged by Egyptian troops and taken by storm, the Jews where murdered and plundered, and the survivors scarcely even allowed to retain a few rags to cover them. No pen can describe the despair of these unfortunates. The women were treated with brutal cruelty; and even to this day, many are found, who from that time became miserable cripples. With truth can the Lamentations of Jeremiah[1] be employed here. Since that great misfortune up to the present day, the Jews of Hebron languish in the deepest misery, and the present Scheik is unwearied in his endeavours, not to better their condition, but on the contrary to make it worse.

5) The chief evidence of their miserable condition is the universal poverty which we remarked in Palestine, and which is here truly characteristic; for nowhere else in our long journeys, in Europe, Asia and Africa did we observe it among the Jews. It even causes leprosy among the Jews of Palestine, as in former times. Robbed of their means of subsistence from the cultivation of the soil and trade, they only exist upon the charity of their brethren in the faith in foreign parts. — The writer, who has seen all this misery with his own eyes, and with his hands has touched the deep and ever open and bleeding wounds of his brethren, has often repeated in his heart the words of Jeremiah: „If I go forth into the field, there behold the slain with the sword, and when I enter into the city then behold those

[1] Lamentations of Jeremiah. c. V. 10.

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who are sick with famine."[1] — „How is my heart oppressed with sadness! how loudly it throbs that I can nowhere find peace." — But with all the misery which he grieves over, has he also admired the resignation with which his brethren in the faith have borne their misfortunes for hundreds of years up to this time, and the confidence, with which they continue to be steadfast in hope. Like shadows they steal over the land, which nourishes their cruel and imperious tyrants. The ignorant and barbarous Arab tramples this sacred soil beneath his feet, and considers the Jew a disinherited and accursed being, unworthy of dwelling there; and yet these ruins, these desolate cities, these wide-spreading fields now uncultivated and laid waste, are the inheritance of Israel; and still does this fruitful land up to the present day bring forth abundantly every kind of grain, fruits of all countries, and excellent wine; and its air is also of exquisite purity and freshness.

„For who shall have pity upon thee, O Jerusalem, or who shall bemoan thee?[2] — My heart is pained that my people have fallen into such great misfortunes; it grieves and afflicts me. — Let us pray, lifting up our soul under the Lord. Oh Thou, the hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in time of trouble, why shouldest Thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night? — Why shouldest Thou be as a man astonied, as a mighty man that cannot save? yet Thou, O Lord, art in the midst of us, and we are called by Thy name; leave us not."[3] Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved: for Thou art my praise.[4]

In a word the state of the Jews in Palestine, body as well as mind, is an unbearable one; and yet there the land yields most abundantly. If the possession of it were not to *completely* in the hands of the Arabs, — if one could only

[1] Jeremiah. c. XIV. 18.
[2] Jeremiah. c. XV. 5.
[3] Jeremiah. c. XIV. 8. 9.
[4] Jeremiah. c. XVII. 14.

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secure for the Jews some little portion of it, and give them the means for its cultivation, sufficient sources of industry would be open to them, wherewith to obtain a livelihood. But what does it benefit them to cultivate the ground, if the Arabs rob them of the harvest?

At the sight of all the misery in which a country languishes, — a country, which has so much right to universal sympathy, I venture to raise a cry for help to my brethren in the faith in Europe. They will hear me; their hearts will be touched, and full of noble feeling, they will stretch forth their hands in aid of those imfortunates for whom I plead. „The fettered prisoner," says the Talmud, „cannot free himself, and it adds: „He, who has a good purpose in view will receive from God the means to carry it out."

A noble hearted man, whose name is ever mentioned with gratitude and veneration by our brethren in the faith, has been himself in Palestine among our people. I mean Sir Moses Montefiore, of London.

The charitable institutions, which he has himself founded at Jerusalem, are the abiding proofs of his great and noble exertion to alleviate the misery of his brethren; and thanks to the piety of this distinguished man and to the unwearied benevolence of his wife, the condition of the Jews in Jerusalem may become in time less wretched.

The old system of yearly almsgiving, which was but of little benefit, was of necessity discontinued; for a mere improvement in their personal condition, unaccompanied by any elevation of their moral worth, could have no lasting and happy result. In order to raise the Jewish inhabitants of Palestine from their degradation, — a work, which was commenced with much zeal and circumspection — it was necessary above all else, besides securing to them the supply of their bodily wants, to awaken in them, by instruction and by personal exertion, a feeling of their own worth.

And certainly never has assistance been more nobly

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and usefully bestowed. Even strangers admire this work of love; and mouths and hands are full of praise and gratitude.

May the Almighty, the all seeing One, protect and sanctify their work; and the Children of Israel will not cease to bless them.

„The Lord hath shown His power before all people, that all nations may see the salvation of our God."

„I pray to the Lord Omnipotent, that He will end my sufferings. May He send me help from above, and assistance against my oppressors." — The Lord hath made bare His Holy Arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.[1]

Journey through the Mountain of Lebanon.

In January 1848 I left the Holy Land Palestine, in order to go over Lebanon to Damascus. I began my journey according to the following route. Several hours' journey from Zephath flows the river Jordan, which is here very narrow, it is crossed by a bridge, which by the Arabs is called Djesser Jacob (Jacob's bridge). On the other side of the Jordan, near the bridge, is built an Arabian Funduk (inn), where I spent the night. From this place I passed in company with two Arabs over the plain Medan towards Novaran or Nuaran, and towards evening we reached a mountain, which is called by the Arabs Djebel (mountain) Heisch, of which I shall speak later. Opposite this mountain to the west is another high mountain, the Djebel Makmel, which is covered with snow nearly the whole of the year. Between these two mountains lies a broad deep valley, which the Arabs call Al Bika. In this valley to the east of Mount Makmel are found the ruins of Balbec, and under the fragments and rubbish are stones from 10 to 20 feet in length, — the remains of a building which, according to

[1] Isaiah. c. LII. 10.

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tradition, was formerly a magnificent palace of King Solomon. The legends of the Arabs assert that King Solomon had this palace built for Balkis, Queen of Sheba.

Balbec is one of the most remarkable structures of King Solomon. It is mentioned in the Bible by the name of Beth Halwanon (house of Lebanon). In the first Book of Kings c. VII. 2. the extraordinary structure of the Palace is described; which we likewise find mentioned in the same Book c. IX. 19. and in II. Chronicles c. VIII. 6.

In the account of Rabbi Joseph Schwarz a native of Jerusalem in his Hebrew work Tewuat Haarez (Jerusalem 1845) Vol. 2. Fol. 33. p. 2. it is related when, and by whom this extraordinary building was destroyed. It is written as follows: „In the year 5162, according to Biblical calculation, Tamerlane, an eastern King, who dwelt at Samarkand in Mongolia, came and conquered the whole of Persia and the middle of Asia. In the same year he also subdued Anatolia, Syria and Palestine, spreading desolation and destruction wherever he went. This ancient and remarkable building in Lebanon likewise fell a sacrifice to his fury.“ From this account, according to my calculation, the house of Balbec stood for 2200 years: — this I will here historically note down.

According to the calculations of Seder Olam Solomon began his reign, after Biblical reckoning, in the year	2926
He commenced the building of the Temple in the 4th year of his reign (I. Kings VI. 1. II. Chronicles III. 2.); therefore in the year	2930
The building of the Temple lasted seven years (I. Kings VI. 38); therefore up to the year	2937
Later he built a palace for himself (I. Kings VII. 1.), which took up 13 years; bringing it therefore to the year	2950
Solomon reigned forthy years (I. Kings XI. 42. II. Chronicles IX. 30); 24 of which were spent in erecting the above buildings; after	

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which a period of 16 years remains up to the time of his death. In these 16 years he built the house of Lebanon, Tadmur and other places (I. Kings VII. 2. IX. 17—20. II. Chronicles VIII, 1—7). If we add these 16 years to the above date 2950, then we have the year of the death of Solomon . . 2966

The house of Balbec was destroyed 5162

It had therefore stood from 2196

or about 2200 years.

On the road from Balbec to Damascus one comes to a spring which is called Fije (Arabic Fitschi), the water of which united to several other springs ultimately forms a river which flows down past Damascus towards the sea, where it unites with the river Bardi, and falls into the sea Bahret-el-Merdsch.

To the north of Mount Makmel, near Danijeh, is a forest of several hundreds of cedar trees, of which some have attained a height of about 80 feet, and beneath round the trunk a circumference of 36 to 40 foot.

The first mentioned mountain Djebel Heisch rests with its base on one side of the Antilebanon mountain, whose north side is uncultivated and stretches away into the desert, whilst its southern side cultivated and inhabited extends to the place Banijas.[1] The north side extends nearly to Damascus. Near the Djebel Heisch a second mountain rises upon Antelebanon, — the Djebel Assaik, called by the Arabs Djebel Tels (snow mountain). These mountains form the highest summits of Lebanon.

On these mountains, on the road to Damascus, lies the village Beth-el-Desana in the neighbourhood of which, about an hour's journey towards the north, rises the source of the river Al-Bardi (Bardi means *cold*), which flows north-east towards Damascus, where it is divided into two parts, one

[1] On a mountain an hour to the north of Banijas, is shewn to this day an ancient building, called by the Arabs Messet-el-Tair, where, according to their tradition, God made His covenant with Abraham.

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of which runs trough the city of Damascus, and the other by the side of it, and after a while becomes united with the Fitschi, and falls into the sea Bahret-el-Merdsch.

The mountain of Lebanon is very fruitful: it produces superior good grain and abundance of excellent wine. The breeding of cattle, particularly of sheep, is a matter of great importance in the country. Of natural produce the cultivation of cotton and silk is especially attended to, from which the inhabitants make a stuff which they call Kitbye.

The chief part of the population is formed by the tribes of the Druses, whose religion is a mixture of Christianity and Mahometanism; among whom I was told, the practice, abhorrent to all human notions prevails, that a father may take his daughter and a brother his sister, to wife.

As a particular proof of the degree this strange custom is practised I will relate the following fact. An Israelite was on very friendly terms with the head of a Druse family, and was asked one day by the son of his friend to obtain for him from his father his own sister for his wife. The Israelite expressed himself willing to undertake this commission, and conveyed to his Druse friend the petition of his son. The father however replied that he could not comply with the wish of his son, because he had determined to marry his daughter himself. This fact was related to me by the Israelite himself.

The inhabitants of the mountain form a sort of republic. Two sheiks each of whom has his own district, govern the country. The one, named Amir Abschir, dwells in the city of Dir-el-Kamir, to the north-east of Tyrus; the other, called Hamir, lives near Aldania. The Druses are of great and powerful stature, and bold and fearless warriors.

In some places isolated Jewish families are to be found; they are much esteemed by the Druses, and, like the inhabitants themselves, are occupied in the cultivation of the soil. The above mentioned unholy custom is not practised by them; they are very religious, but ignorant. Their children, especially the girls, according to the old patriarchal

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custom, go out to tend their flocks, just as the Bible (Genesis c. XXIX. 9.) relates of Rachel. A circumstance was related to me which took place some years ago, which was to this effect: a young girl was tending her flocks on the mountain, when she was assailed by a Druse. She begged him to leave her, and then threatened to meet violence with violence. As the Druse was heedless of either prayers or threats, the girl drew a pistol and shot him. When the case came before the Court of Justice the girl not only escaped unpunished, but received much praise for her courage.[1]

In the district of Sheik Hamir resides a great number of Christians, — the so called Maronites, whose Patriarch lives in the city of Kaniban, where also their church stands. Sanguinary skirmishes frequently take place between them and the tribes of the Druses; in one of which, some time since, many Christians perished.

From Lebanon I went on to Kanneitra, Sasa, Kokab, Daraya, and after fourteen days arrived at Damascus.

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[1] Rabbi Joseph Schwarz in the work we have already mentioned likewise relates this fact.

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CHAPTER VII.

Damascus (Arabic Schamm).

Synagogue of Djubar. — Medrasch Gachsi, the ancient asylum of lepers. — The Mosque Moawiah. — The grave of Naoman. — Latkie. — Antakijeh. — Aleppo. — The grotto of Ezra. — Ancient Synagogue. — Tedif. — Aintab. — Merasch. — An accident. — Birdschak, city of Nimrod. — Urfa, ancient monuments. — Suwerek. — Tschermuk.

The city of Damascus was, as the Bible relates, for a long time the residence of the Kings of Syria. From 500 to 600 Jewish families (Rajahs) dwell there. Besides the leprous Jews, there also resides here a great number, under the protection of their respective Consuls, members of their own faith dwelling in the city, so that the total amounts to more than 4000.[1] They possess several Synagogues, of which one contains the five books of Moses, written in one volume on parchment bearing the date of 4749 (989 after Christ). There is another manuscript, containing the writings of all the Prophets, dated 4344 (581 after Christ). The first pages are ornamented with coloured pictures, representing the Temple with the altar of the Holy of Holies, several sacred vessels and a drawing of the ancient walls of Jerusalem, which latter though somewhat faded is still very correct, and bears the traces of a clever masterhand. The letters of the manuscript are Hebrew, square, and of the usual form.

1 Pethachia, p. 193, mentions 10,000 Jews in Damascus.

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Half a mile to the east of this town, on leaving by the Gate Bab Duma, lies the little village of Djubar[1] or Djubaris in which reside several Jews, and where there is a very ancient Synagogue.[2] Tradition says that it was built by the Prophet Elisha and destroyed by Titus, but restored again by the Rabbi Eleazar, the son of Arack. In the Talmud[3] there is also mention made of a Synagogue in Djubar, which was ruined in the 16th century by the apostasy of a Jew.[4]

The structure of this ancient building reminds one of the Mosque Moawiah,[5] the interior was supported by 13 marble pillars; 6 on the right and 7 on the left side, and

1 *Ritter, Erdkunde,* Vol. 17, 2. div., p. 1312: The village Dschobar to the north-east of Damascus is particularly held sacred by the Jews; because they consider it as the Hobar (or Hoba, Genesis XIX. 15), to which place Abraham, with his servants pursued the four Kings of Syria, „and pursued them unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus, and delivered Lot and his goods from the hands of the enemies. But another etymological explanation of the ancient Arabs mentions instead of Hoba the spot Berzeh (derived from *baraza*, to advance), which is situated more to the north, at the foot of the Kasinu-mountain, as being the place to which Abraham victoriously advanced, and then performed his devotions on the mountain, which is therefore dedicated to him. — His house steward Eleazar of Damascus is likewise honorably mentioned in the legend.

2 *Ritter's Erdkunde,* Vol. 17, 2. div., p. 1424: In Dschobar, according to v. Kremer, is an ancient venerated Synagogue, in which is preserved an old scroll, written on parchment, containing the Law. In this Synagogue is likewise shewn in an old walled up stone vault, the tomb of the Prophet Elijah, in which sick persons are said to recover in one night. Every Friday the Jews dwelling at Damascus assemble there, and read together the Old Testament.

3 Messechet Berachot Fol. 50. — Seder Hadaroth Fol. 77.

4 Teschuwath Mabit Vol. 3, Fol. 147, p. 2.

5 Benjamin de Tudela does not mention these Synagogues. — Pethachia, p. 198, speaks of two Synagogues; of which the one was erected by Elisha, the other by Rabbi Eleazar, son of Asariah. He transfers them however to Damascus: *In Damasco Synagoga exstat, quam condidit Elisaeus, itemque alia magna, cujus fundator R. Elieser Asariae filius, in qua precantur.* — I however think that my assertion is correct, and that the two Synagogues are but one, as above mentioned.

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CHAPTER VII.

Damascus (Arabic Schamm).

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CHAPTER VII.

Damascus (Arabic Schamm).

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is everywhere inlaid with marble. There is only one portal by which to enter. Under the holy shrine, where the Pentateuch was preserved, was a grotto, wherein several persons could stand upright; the descent to which was by a flight of about 20 steps. According to the Jews, the Prophet Elisha is said to have found in this grotto a place of refuge from the persecutions of King Ahab. Except the grotto, in which there is nothing uncommon, there is nothing more of the above mentioned to be seen. — At the entrance of the Synagogue, towards the middle of the wall to the right, is an irregularly formed stone, on which can be observed the traces of several steps. Tradition asserts that upon this stone sat King Hazael, when the Prophet Elisha anointed him King. The Jews relate wonderful things of this Synagogue. It was respected by every conqueror; and, even the Arabs, who otherwise laid waste the whole country, have not touched this building, which is of an extraordinary solidity; and the Jews, who sought refuge there, were never exposed to attacks.

If one go out of the Gate Bab-el-Sherky an hour's journey to the east of the town stands an ancient building called Medrass Gachsi, after a servant of Elisha,[1] who being cursed by that Prophet was struck with white leprosy, which tormented him to the end of his life. Even in the present time they seek out those who are afflicted by this incurable illness, and endeavour for the sake of safety to confine them to several houses, which are surrounded by a garden and moat. Tradition has ascribed to this place since the remotest period, the power of curing this disease. A clear spring of water bubbles on one side of this hospital, which has been founded for hundreds of years, and is entirely supported by the gifts and alms of pious Mahomedans.

In the city is a very extensive place surrounded by a strong and high wall, in the centre of which is an ancient

[1] II. Kings. V. 20. 27.

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building called by the Mahomedans Moawiah,[1] by the Jews Bethrimon.[2] It is used at the present time as a Mosque.[3] A marble colonnade passes through this large square building; walls, columns, floor, ceiling, all are of marble. Light and air enter by means of a large opening in the ceiling. There are four large portals to the interior of the building. Here the Mahomedans commence their pilgrimage to the grave of their Prophet in Mecca. Furnished with all that is necessary for their journey, the caravans with their camels enter at one door and go out at the opposite one, continuing from thence their pious journey. In the interior of this Mosque is the tomb of Jichia ben Sachor, who is venerated as a Saint by the Mahomedans.

In the eastern part of the town, outside the Gate Bab-el-Scherky, at a distance of about half an hour's journey, is to be found a tomb of colossal size; but otherwise unworthy of any observation. Tradition relates that it is the tomb of Naeman, the chief general in the brave army of the King of Aram. The Arabians call this tomb Sheik-Atzlan, and venerate it as a sanctuary. A few steps from it flows a strong stream, which springs from the Mountain Riboui-Vill-Min-Sar. The Jews say that this is the Mount Hermon, mentioned by King David.[4] The name of the stream is Zouf (wool); because wool is oftentimes washed in its waters. From the same source rise four streams, which send their waters to Damascus, and from thence divide themselves into several smaller rivers. The first of them is called Annivad, the second Thora, the third Jazid, and the fourth Bardi; these, according to the Jews, are the rivers mentioned in the II. Kings. c. V. 12.

From Damascus I journeyed through Mount Lebanon

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[1] See the history of this Mosque in Dr. Carl Ritter's *Erdkunde* B. 4, Vol. 17, div. 2, p. 1363—1375.

[2] II. Kings. c. V. 18.

[3] Benjamin de Tudela p. 47, likewise speaks of this Mosque, and calls it Guona Damessek.

[4] Psalm CXXXIII. 3.

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up the river Bardi over Deir Kanon, Zuk, Ez Zebedoni and Andjar towards Beirut, where I embarked, and over Tripoli di Suri (called by the Arabs Trabolus-el-Scham) proceeded to Latkie. This last journey was a very difficult one on account of the wind being against us, and the ship was oftentimes in danger of being wrecked. After a stormy passage of 11 days I landed at Latkie, procured there a horse and, accompanied by two Arabs, of whom the one acted as guard and the other was the owner of the horse, rode on towards the Antakijeh of the Talmud. On the way there we came to a tent, out of which an Arab appeared, and demanded of me, as I was a Jew, a toll of 2 piastres, whether in the name of the government or for himself I am unable to decide. I declined paying, and rode on undisturbed. In Antakijeh itself I found 150 Jewish families, tolerably contented with their position, very religious, not ignorant, but remarkably superstitious.

Aleppo.[1]

Aleppo is 12 days' journey from Damascus, and the route is a very dangerous one, on account of the many Arab robbers.

[1] Kayserling, Pedro Teixeira: Before we accompany Teixeira to Aleppo, his next place of destination, let us make a halt with him at Ana on the Euphrates.*) — According to the tradition of the inhabitants the town is very old, and mentioned in the Bible under the name of Hena.**) The most difficult part of the journey which poor Pedro had to perform was that from Ana to Aleppo. It lasted from the end of December until the middle of March, and how truly did he thank God when at last he reached the town. That Aleppo

*) See Tewat Haarez by Rabbi Joseph Schwarz. Fol 143.
**) II. Kings. c. XVIII. 34; c. XIX. 13, and the corresponding passage in Isaiah. c. XXXVII. 13. — P. Teixeira, 139.

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Aleppo is called by two names by the Jews, viz. Zova

or Haleb, as it is called by the Moors and Turks, is the often mentioned Aram Soba of the Bible is maintained by ancient and modern Geographers as well as by Teixeira. The town, which is generally supposed to contain more than 14,000 houses, formerly numbered about 2200, of which many were distinguished by their size and beauty. „But the houses not only of the Turks and Moors are as magnificent as can be imagined, but those of the Jews too and of the Greek and Roman Catholic Christians and Armenians are beautiful enough to be the dwellings of princes.*) We do not speak of the three hundred Mosques situated here, and of their magnificent internal arrangements, nor of the many warehouses, with their merchandise from all parts of the world, nor of the broad streets of the town paved with slabs of marble, neither do we dwell upon the royal hospital, of the management of which our traveller complains, but we do speak of the hill which rises in the midst of the town, and like a Palladium, is separated from it on all sides. It is round like a little mountain, and upon it is a fortress en miniature, which as the Jews and Moors maintain was founded by Joab, the general of David. According to tradition, not only the synagogue there was built by the same Joab, but — imagination gives itself play! — the Patriarch Abraham is even said to have taken up his residence for a time on the fortress mount.**) Moors and Turks, Christians and Armenians, Chaldeans and Greeks dwell in this rich commercial city. At the time that Teixeira visited the town more than a 1000 Jewish families dwelt in a separate part of it, which was enclosed by walls. Pedro relates that they possess a large synagogue, which, according to their belief, was built 1500 years ags. Most of the Jews there are rich and engaged in trade; others earn their livelihood as runners, and others support themselves as artists, workers in gold and such like.†)

*) Ibid. 175: *y no solo las de los Turcos y Moros son de aquella suerte, pero aun de las de los Judios y Christianos Griegos y Armenios son muchas de tanto precio que son capazes de habitar en ellas Principes.*

**) Ibidem 176: *En medio de la ciudad esta un collado alto, separado ygualmente por todas las partes de todo el resto de la ciudad, redondo como un monte de trigo, sobre el qual esta una fortaleza que Moros y Judios tienen per tradicion que primero la fundo Joab Capitan General de David: tambien affirman que en aquel mismo lugar residio el Patriarcha Abraham algun tiempo.*

†) Teix. 178: *Tambien viven Judios de los quales haura mil casas buenas en barrio separado, pero dentro de los muros, con una grande Sinagoga, que affirman hauer mil y quinientos anos que fue fundada y se conserua: hay muchos dellos ricos, los mas son mercaderes, el resto corredores y officiales como plateros, lapidarios, y de ostras artes semejantes.*

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and Aramzova,[1] the first name is used to the present day in all Jewish writings. It was the capital of a small kingdom, whose ruler, in the time of David, was Hadarezer, son of Rechob.[2]

The Jewish population of the city comprises about 1500 to 2000 families,[3] who enjoy great privileges under the protection of the European Consuls, of whom some are of their own faith; for Raphael di Piechotti, Consul of Russia and Prussia, and Elias Piechotti, Consul General of Austria, have obtained a certain influence over the Pacha, which they frequently exert in favour of their brethren.

The Synagogue is of considerable age, and is supported inside by a triple row of 72 pillars. In order to enter the Temple one must descend 20 steps, caused by the sinking of the ground. The saying goes that this building was erected by Joab the general of David. The windows which lead out into a large beautiful garden belonging to the community, run parallel with it, on account of the ground having sunk. A room in the upper story is somewhat decayed, and serves at the present time as a retreat for the women visiting the Synagogue.

The Jews dwelling at Aleppo distinguish themselves as much by their faithful devotion and fidelity to the great and holy bequest of their fathers — the Jewish Law — as by their profound Jewish-scientific acquirements. Not less than 60 learned men bear there the name of „Chacham“ (the wise). The venerable, grey headed chief Rabbi Abraham Antibi, who by the publication of several learned works, of which I will only mention „Ohel Jescharim“, has gained for himself a great name, and the second Rabbi Mardochai Liwaton, who had the kindness to visit me several times in my lodgings, — stand there as especial patterns of piety and learning, and merit a place at the side of the great Rabbis of Poland.

1 II. Samuel c. VIII. 3. 5.

2 I. Chronicles. c. XVIII. 3—6.

3 Benjamin de Tudela, p. 49, relates that 1500 Israelites dwell at Aleppo.

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The study of the Law is cherished here with the greatest devotion, there is scarcely a Jew in Aleppo of whatever age or rank, who, notwithstanding all the demands made on his time by his business or position, does not find leisure every day at certain time to repair to the ever flowing stream of Thora, in order to derive instruction from that bubbling water of life, and strengthen himself for the holy and sublime duties of his religion. At the hour of midnight the greater part of the community is to be found assembled within the walls of the Synagogue; youths, in the feeling of their full and undiminished strength, — men, with their cares for wife and child, — even the weak old man, fast approaching the tomb, — all are assembled in that sacred place; and while without darkness covers the earth, here within awake to the brightest spiritual light the pious minds of the faithful sons of Judah. Until the morning dawns they remain together, occupied in the study of the Talmud and Sohar, or giving themselves up to prayer. The morning prayer closes these assemblies, and the day finds them busy and active in their different occupations.

Thus passes night after night, with the exception only of the Friday to the Sabbath; for then their occupations are not divided; but led by four conducters of the choir, the whole assembly joins in sacred and edifying songs composed by their Chachamim. This kind of psalmody makes a deep impression upon an European, by the peculiarity of the method of singing, and the enthusiastic character of the chorus. The greater number of these chants are composed by the distinguished poet Rabbi Israel Nagarah of Damascus, whose celebrated work Semiroth Israel is universally known. The leaders of the choir possess an extraordinary memory. I heard of one who knew by heart more than 1000 hymns. Besides this there is a singing society, instituted especially for practise of psalmody, which is performed with an enthusiasm and reverence such as I never heard before, so, that it fills the listener with a true enthusiasm.

The Sabbath and festival days are divided between

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devotional exercises and amusements. The latter are gone through with quite as much conscientiousness as the former. All take part in them, the rich as well as the poor, without any distinction. The wealthy take such loving care of the poor, that the latter want for nothing in the celebration of their Sabbaths and festivals. Altogether the benevolence and hospitality of the Jews at Aleppo is really great: they are indeed worthy sons of Abraham. To the European Jew all houses are open; he can spend weeks, even months, in the house of his host, without being reminded by the smallest inattention on the part of his host, or any member of his household, that he is not at home. I myself for the space of five weeks found in the house of the worthy Salomon Lunjado the most friendly reception.

But not only to the members of his tribe and faith, but to every Christian traveller is the Jewish house open.

The houses are very beautiful and are remarkable for their extreme cleanliness. The food is prepared in a savoury way, and would be found excellent even by the spoiled palate of an European. The Jews dress here as they do in Palestine. They speak Arabic, but many of them speak also Hebrew with a so called Portuguese accent, and likewise Italian with great fluency. The poor of the community are very numerous, but are generously assisted.

Aleppo is surrounded by high walls. Its flourishing commerce extends to Mosul, Bagdad, Diabekr, towards Egypt, the East Indies, and even to England and France. In the year 1705 an earthquake devastated the town, and many persons were half buried, so that they appeared like trees with their roots in the ground. Another earthquake, which was felt by the whole province, caused in the year 1822 great destruction. A third shock in the year 1848, which I myself witnessed there, was less violent, and left behind no important traces.

Eight hours' journey from Aleppo, on the road to Aintab, is a place called by the Jews Tedif, and by the Arabs after the name of the great Ezra, Capel-Azar. In the Sy-

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nagogue of the place is shewn a grotto, and also a stone, where, according to the tradition of the country, Ezra is said to have written the Thora[1] after the return from Babylon. Only about 20 Jewish families live here, who, like the Jews of all the other places in the country which I visited, speak Arabic. Before the beginning of the Feast of weeks the inhabitants of Aleppo annually make a pilgrimage to Tedif.

From Tedif I retourned to Aleppo, whence I travelled to the Arabian town Killis, to the north of Aleppo; its Jewish population of about 50 families live by trade, and are in a very happy condition. After a short rest I turned my steps towards Aintab, south-east from Killis, which I reached after a journey of a day and a half. Before I was permitted to enter the town, I was obliged to keep with my companions a quarantine of 10 days in one of the two buildings composing the lazaretto, which is sometimes so overfilled, that travellers are often obliged to encamp in the open air. The travellers, who are looked upon with most suspicion by the officers of Health, are the merchants from the neighbouring mountains, especially from Daghestan and Grusim.

At a distance of three days' journey from Aintab, the country assumes quite another character; one enters upon a region of mountains, whose summits are constantly covered with snow, which when melted flows down in dirty foaming streams. To the north of Aintab, on the road to Merasch, flows the river Marad.

I next arrived at Merasch, which lies at the foot of Mount Taurus, whose glistening glaciers lift up their heads to the clouds. The climate is always rough but healthy; the men are strong and of great stature. The town trades with the neighbourhood and with Kurdistan in agricultural produce, cattle and wool. The streets of the place are on both sides encompassed by canals, which are supplied during the whole year by the water of the melted snow. The houses are handsome; and the inhabitants, of whom

[1] Ezra. c. VII. 6. 21.

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many are rich, dress in the Turkish style. The Jewish community is comprised of about 50 families, who are in a tolerably prosperous condition, and enjoy many privileges.

From Merasch I roved through the neighbourhood, which, rich in picturesque views, deserves the attention of travellers, and then retourned to Aintab. While returning, and riding through a stream formed by the melted mountain snow, my horse shied and threw me, and I remained hanging with my foot in the stirrup. I fell backwards, and was dragged by the horse a considerable distance, until at last, bruised and covered with blood, I remained lying on the ground in a state of unconsciousness, in which condition I was picked up by a passing caravan. After some days of rest, I again resumed my journey; as I had neither time nor money enough to wait until I was perfectly cured.

I next proceeded to Birdschak, in Arabic Bir-Sacca (Birra), which was only at the distance of a day and a half's journey. The Jews believe that this is the city Aram Naharajim, in which the parents of Rebecca dwelt.[1] At present Jews no longer dwell in that place; though they often come there on business.

The travellers, who have eluded the quarantine in Aintab, have to endure this disagreable process here. In order to enter the city one has in a ferry-boat to cross the Euphrates, which protects the town on this side, whilst the other sides are protected partly by a chain of mountain, which rise quite close to the town, and partly by some old walls, which join on the mountain. From a distance, this large wall, which surrounds the town in a semicircle, and by its outlines forms a strong contrast with the dark blue back ground of the chain of granite, presents an extraordinary appearance. At the foot of the mountain are to be seen a number of houses of different sizes, part already fallen into ruins; the one however always adjoining the other. Each of these houses contains a cellar, in which are

[1] Genesis. c. XXIV. 10.

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built two or three rooms, capable of holding at most two to three persons. All these rooms stand in connection with the enormous subterranean passages, which extend under the town, under the Euphrates to the distance of an hour's journey from the other side of the river. On the summit of the mountain is built a Funduk (inn), in which dwell Armenian merchants.

Urfa.

Eighteen hours' journey from Birdschak lies, in a desert neighbourhood, the town of Urfa, likewise enclosed by a wall. Round about the town are to be found a great number of grottoes, built by human hand; these are all open, and lead into a subterranean passage, which is said to be several hours' journey in length. Regular gates, doors, streets, extensive places and even wells are to be found here. It is beyond all doubt that these are the traces of a town destroyed by an earthquake. Could it not be the ancient „Ur" of the Chaldees, of which Moses speaks? [1]

In Urfa are to be found monuments of antiquity, which date from the oldest biblical times; some are preserved up to this day; others are lying in ruins. We mention here some of the most remarkable:

1) The house, in which Abraham was born. It is an artificial grotto, hewn out of a single piece of rock; and a cradle of white stone. The grotto is closed and guarded by the Arabs; one can however enter it on payment of a small gratuity. The Arabs are wont to carry thither their sick children, and to lay them in Abraham's cradle, in which they leave the little ones for the whole night; if they are not found dead the next morning, their recovery can be looked forward to with safety.

[1] Genesis. c. XV. 7.

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2) The furnace, into which Abraham, according to the Sefer Hajaschar, was thrown by Nimrod. It is a trench surrounded by a railing, and in order to protect it from the inclemency of the weather, a house, which is kept carefully closed, has been erected on the spot. — At the present time a stream flows there, which divides and forms two ponds, which abound in fish. Like all other places and subjects, which are in any way able to be brought into connection with the great patriarch, these are contemplated with the greatest veneration. The Mahomedans entertain the greatest respect for the holy man; the furnace therefore, as the place of his martyrdom, and the spring, which flows there, are considered sacred. Even the fishes, which live in the ponds formed and supplied by the spring, are regarded with reverence; so much so, that fishing in these sacred waters is considered a capital crime, and punished with death. The fishes are consequently so numerous, and are so accustomed to the presence of man, that instead of shunning his approach, they quietly continue their merry gambols.[1]

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[1] Kayserling, P. Teixeira: Four days' journey from Aleppo on the declivity of two mountains, is the old town of Orfa, the original residence of Abraham, as such, bearing the name of „Ur“.*) Up to this day, says the traveller, is the spot on which the Chaldeans endeavoured to burn Abraham, universally reverenced. The inhabitants shew a spring, in which is to be found an excellent kind of fish. It would be considered a sin to eat these fishes, because they are said to have extinguished the funeral pile, which had been prepared for Abraham.**) The inhabitants of this place likewise know the spring, out of which Rebecca, whom they call Rafka, is said to have drawn water for the faithful servant of Abraham and for his camels, when he came there to fetch a wife for the son of his master.†)

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*) Genesis. c. XI. 28.

**) Midrasch Bereschit 38. (Of this miracle the Midrasch knows nothing.)

†) Teixeira 186: *Orfa, ciudad antiquisima, Hamada en otro tiemps Ur, ado los Caldeos quiezieron quemar a Abraham, y hay aun oy en ella lugar con este titulo tenido en grande veneracion; y muestran alli una fuente en cuya agua se cria buen pescado, comer del qual se tiene por sacrilegio, porque dizen que fue criada miraculosamente para apagar el fuego en que querian quemar el santo Patriarcha: fuera de aqueste*

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3) About 50 steps from this furnace are two stone pillars, connected together by means of an iron chain. According to the tradition of the place, the fire into which Abraham was thrown is said to have been so hot, that a near approach to it was impossible; and this apparatus was therefore put up, in order that the martyr might be thrown from afar into the flames. The already mentioned book Hajaschar relates all the details, as to how the patriarch was saved: his brother Haran however perished.

About an hour's journey from the town, on the side of a rocky mountain, are built in several places a great number of square grottoes of considerable size. One of these, more roomy than the others, leads into a second one, these together form a large chamber. The interior of these ancient buildings is very regular; the ceilings are smooth, some stone pillars, consisting of one single piece, are still standing, — others have fallen down; all are however hollow and inhabited by serpents and scorpions; dreadful guests, whom it would not be advisable to disturb in their pleasant repose. — Some of these grottoes are furnished with a kind of fore yard, and at the present time serve as pens for the herds of sheep.

The Jews as well as the Mussulmans believe and corroborate the tradition of the place, that the celebrated hunter Nimrod, who is mentioned in the Bible [1] as the builder of cities, dwelt here with his people.[2]

At the distance of an hour's journey from the city of Nimrod, I visited another grotto, over which a beautiful arabian house, planted round with trees, has been built. This is said to have been the house of Iob, and beside it there is a cave, in which the pious sufferer is said to have

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[1] Genesis. c. X. 11.

[2] *Ritter's Erdkunde.* Vol. 11, p. 317.

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pueblo se ve un pozo, que affirman ser aquel de cuya agua Rebeca (a quien el los dizen Rafka) dio de beuer al criado de Abraham, que gua a buscar muger para Izach, y a sus camellos.

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sat, when, tormented with leprosy and affliction, he received the visit of his friends. In the neighbouring rocks are deep holes, which were made use of by Iob as corn-magazines; and the Arabs use them to this day for the same purpose. In the courtyard near the house is a well, which is furnished with very good water.

In Urfa reside about 150 Jewish families;[1] they are free and happy; so ignorant however, that hardly 50 persons among them are able to perform their devotions.

The village *Charan*, which is well known in the Bible, being the death place of Tarah, the father of Abraham,[2] is situated six hours' journey further to the north. In this place Rebecca is said to have given the advice to her husband, that Jacob should flee from his brother Esau.[3] — The Arabs show, half a mile from Charan, a very deep well covered by a stone, and assert that this is the well mentioned in the Bible.[4]

The Bené-Haramachim (children of Haramachim) inhabitants of mountains, of whom the Book of Esther speaks, dwell near to Charan, about a day's journey from it.

Siwerek. Tschermuk.

On the day of my departure from Urfa, the caravan, which I had joined, was attacked by robbers. I applied to the captain, and tendered him my submission. The caravan offered but a short and fruitless resistance; after which our travellers were made prisoners, bound and gagged; I was however left at liberty, and was conducted in my Mahomedan dress to the tent of the chief. As it was growing dark

1 *Ritter's Erdkunde.* Vol. 11, p. 327. mentions 500 Jews.

2 Genesis. c. XI. 32.

3 Genesis. c. XXVII. 44.

4 Genesis. c. XXIX. 2. 3. 8. 10.

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I offered him a drink, which consisted of nothing else than good brandy;[1] he drank without suspicion; and soon afterwards fell into a deep sleep. Of this I gave information to my travelling companions; during the night they all freed themselves from their bonds, and we escaped. We seized the chief bandits, bound them, and then applied for help in the next village. Near to Siwerek however a troop of horsemen assailed us, and we were compelled to let our prisoners go, and to take to flight ourselves. On the following day we arrived at Siwerek, after a journey of 3 days.

Siwerek is a very old town, situated in the midst of a very desert region, and surrounded by a wall half fallen into ruins; on one side of which stands a tower in the form of a pyramid. The houses of the town are small, and built of brick; every thing makes an impression of misery and poverty, although the corn-market is considerable and richly furnished. Near to the town are the ruins of a citadel.

Only four Jewish families live in this place; but the community was formerly much more numerous; celebrated Rabbis dwelt there, and commerce flourished. But the plague, that scourge of the east, carried away a great number of the former inhabitants. An hour's journey from the town is a very large Jewish place of burial, in which are some gravestones so ancient, that it was impossible for me to decipher either the dates or their inscriptions.

From Siwerek, the road in a northern direction leads through a mountainous region of enormous rocky cliffs; unhealthy, on account of the many swamps; it is the mountain Kirwantschimen Dagh, called by the Jews Touri Talga (snow mountain). In order to traverse this locality mules are used, which are especially trained for this purpose.

The Jews in the vicinity call the inhabitants of the mountain Ammonites or Moabites; as they believe the are the descendants of the tribes so often mentioned in the Bible as Ammon and Moab, who still maintain their old place of

[1] The Bedouins do not know brandy.

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habitation.[1] I spent a night among these inhabitants of the mountain in the little village of Kirwan, and found there an hospitable shelter. My interpreter asked them whether they were descended from the people Ammon or from Moab, to which we received the answer that they did not know; all that could be asserted was, that the present inhabitants were descendants of both nations. They speak a peculiar language which much resembles the characters of the Kurdish, which, as I have already mentioned, possesses many Chaldaic letters. Their houses are very large, and are built of lime and decorated outside with chalk. In order to keep off the continual frost, a large fire is always kept burning in the inside of the dwellings. The climate is the same as at Kurdistan in Persia; the people themselves are powerfully built; their principal occupation is agriculture; besides which they carry on some trade in sheep, oxen and mules. The character of the people is rude even savage, and being separated from other tribes living around them they form a kind of independent republic. The dress of the people consists of a coarsely woven mantle, similar to those worn on the Moldau, add to this turkish trousers, falling down to their feet, which are enclosed in sandals, and a head dress of lambskin, or a high felt hat without a brim, resembling a tightly drawn up night cap.

I left these mountains accompanied by the Moabite who had sheltered me, and by a brother Israelite. The extremely difficult path which leads over the steep sides of mountains and deep hollows, is only to be traversed under the direction of a guide, which I possessed in the person of my Moabite host. In the midst of a deep hollow path surrounded on all sides by rocks, near to the rustring Kyziltschibu-Tschay river, my guide suddenly stopped, and desired me to show him the contents of my wallet. In reply to my question as to whether we were near to a frontier, or whether he was

[1] Jeremiah. c. XL. 11.

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allowed to exercise the right of tax-collector, he gave me the short answer that so he would have it. I seemingly prepared myself to comply with his request; but took advantage of a favourable moment when he turned his back to throw my cloak over his head. Deprived of the use of his hands, I bound him with the help of my brother Israelite, and took him to Tschermuk; but there however I was soon obliged to let him go again, as I could find no turkish officer of justice.

Tschermuk lies on the montain Mehrab Dagh. The Jewish community numbers about 100 families, who, exposed as they are to be continually plundered, live in a wretched condition. Their customs and dress are mahomedan.

An hour from Tschermuk are numerous hot mineral springs; they are collected in a large stone cistern in a grotto, and serve as a public bath to the inhabitants of the town. I myself had an opportunity of trying the healing power of these springs; for, wounded and exhausted as I was, by using them for ten days, at the moderate price of 5 paras (3 centimes) the bath, I was perfectly cured. Not far from the springs an inn has been built, for the accomodation of the guests who come here to use the baths.

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CHAPTER VIII.

Diabekr.

The town. — Expedition to Armenia. — Ezra's manuscript. — Nisibin. — Tomb of the Rabbi Jehuda ben Betera. — Jewish villages founded by Tselma. — Djesireh. — Zakuh. — Remarkable customs. — Extraordinary marriage.

In order to arrive at the important town of Diabekr, I had to take a two days' journey through the mountains, on which the vegetation is very scanty, and few traces of cultivation are to be found. Here, as well as in other places of the east, the Jews are obliged to inhabit a certain portion of the town: but this separation rests only on the custom of eastern countries, and has nothing exclusive or degrading in it, as the so called Ghetto in Rome. About 250 Jewish families reside in Diabekr; and although there is no learned man to be found among them, still, many of them possess profound knowledge of our dogmas, and understand the text of the Bible.

In a corner of the synagogue is a small apartment, always kept closed, which is held in the most extreme respect not only by the Jews, but also by the followers of other creeds; because it is believed, that the Prophet Elijah once appeared there. In a niche of the wall of this apartment is preserved a Pentateuch, written in the assyrian characters (Hebrew, square). This manuscript, a beautiful volume of the usual size, is only shewn once in each year, on the eve of the day of Atonement (the Col-Nidre), when it is placed on the holy table (Schulchan), and all pious persons draw near and kiss it with the deepest veneration. As a Chacham, it was easy for me to obtain permission to view this highly

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revered relic; but I found nothing particularly remarkable in it. It is written on very thick parchment; the letters resemble those of our Pentateuch; the writing however is ungraceful; in many places it is illegible, and in many it is completely obliterated. The Jews there assert that this copy of the Pentateuch was written by the hand of the Prophet Ezra.

In answer to my question as to the origin of this relic, I was informed that formerly it was in the possession of the very large Jewish community at Mardin; but as that was exposed to continual plunderings, it had been confided to the community of Diabekr, which latter had subsequently refused to give back the work to its former owners. In Mardin I found this assertion confirmed by an acknowledgment of the proper delivery of the book to the community of Diabekr, signed by the chief Elders and other persons of consideration in the place. By further research I ascertained that the community of Mardin had come into possession of the work in the following manner: The Jewish inhabitants of Nisibin (now called Neitzibin by the Jews and Arabs), being attacked by a horde of robbers, had fled to Mardin, and taken the Pentateuch with them. According to their account, this Pentateuch came from the Jeschiba (Academy) of the Rabbi Jehuda ben Betera, who had an Academy at Neitzibin, and was one of the most celebrated and learned scholars of the Talmud. Their tradition also adds, that it was written by Ezra's own hand. Many other manuscripts are said to have been there at the same time; but have been lost in consequence of numerous pillages and attacks.

As this relic deeply interested me I made enquiries of many other persons concerning it; and particularly of a Jew, living in Mardin, a venerable old man, who seemed to me as a prophet in the wilderness, related to me the fact almost in the same words.

The work is doubtless a very ancient one, and deserves in every respect the special investigation of a connoisseur.

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As up to this time, no mention has been made of it by any learned man, I esteem myself happy to be the first who, if only through the relation of widely spread traditions, has related anything concerning it. At the same time I only lament that it was impossible for me to devote my exclusive attention to the form of the „Petuchot and S'etumoth“,[1] to the letters, and to many other points differing in the German and Portuguese rites of the Jews, and by the autority of this ancient codex to decide them. Had I but imagined the importance of this Pentateuch to the Jewish world, I should certainly have devoted my entire time and energy to it, in order to have ensured a more satisfactory result. I shall however be enabled perhaps in my second journey to make this good.

The town of Diabekr is enclosed by a high wall, which dates from the Roman conquest, as some latin inscriptions prove, which have been preserved to this day. This wall is very strong, and extends along a chain of granite rocks, forming a sharp descent to the bed of the Tigris, which is here at least 20 feet deep, navigable and is the road of communication between the towns of Mosul and Bagdad. The navigation is however very dangerous, as the ships often get upon the rocks, and are then engulphed by the boisterous waves. Another great danger is caused by the melting of the snow on the mountains, which rushes down in fearful streams, dragging with it huge masses of earth and rock, and hurling them against the ships, so either crushing them, or causing leaks. I myself saw a ship go down in this manner with crew and freight; only one sailor was able to save himself.

The building of these ships, which can be constructed in the short space of two or three days, is very simple. A number of goats are slaughtered, and their skins taken off entire; these skins are sewn up at the end where the

[1] Petuchot and S'etumoth are different forms of paragraphs in the Pentateuch.

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head is cut off and at other open parts; and are then distended with wind, so that they form large bladders. These bladders are joined together in twelve rows, each row containing twelve skins;[1] and upon these are laid square planks of wood, and the bladders fastened to them. Upon these rafts planks are laid, and on them the goods are packed. These rafts float very easily, but when they strike violently on a rock, the distended skins burst, and goods and property are sunk in the water.

Diabekr numbered in former years over 80,000 inhabitants; but they are reduced by the ravages of the plague to about one third of that number. This disease however almost exclusively visited the northern part, whose empty houses are permitted to fall into ruin. The town carries on an extensive trade with Anatolia, Damascus, Aleppo, Mosul, Bagdad, and Kurdistan. Industry flourishes, and what it produces is widely celebrated; many clever artists in silver, and armourers are to be found here. Splendid gardens surround the town; the interior of which is distinguished by magnificent buildings, many bazaars, numerous fountains, ornamented with beautiful marble columns, and above all a superb Mosque. Much care is taken to keep the interior of the houses neat and clean.

The walls of the town, which I have already mentioned, are so extremely broad, that a carriage can with ease turn round on them. On the top of them, to which one ascends by terraces, several houses are built. As, in company with several Jewish friends, among whom was my host Isaac Misrachi, I was walking one day on the ramparts, from which can be enjoyed a most beautiful view of the town and the picturesque neighbourhood, I expressed a wish to find out what those houses contained. My companions endeavoured to talk me out of such a wild nation, by asserting that

[1] *Ritter's Erdkunde*, vol. 11, p. 64, likewise describes these rafts; but there 59 skins are mentioned as requisite for such a ship. Our assertion is however correct; as we have several times seen them ourselves, and have travelled by them.

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ghosts frequented those houses, and all curiosity would be dangerous. I would not be deterred from my intention, and boldly entered one of the buildings, in which I found nothing remarkable; for it was empty and desolate. It was only on my return that the real cause of this fear was told me: namely, that many Mahomedan women hold secret meetings with young Armenians in these solitary buildings; the deepest mystery is kept concerning it, and for safety one can only enter these buildings armed; so that any inquisitive person runs the risk of paying with his life for his intrusion into such secrets. Later, I found this confirmed, when I wished to investigate a second house; for hardly had I entered it, when a bullet whistled past me, after which I naturally lost all desire for further investigations.

In Diabekr, Arabic, Turkish and Armenian are spoken. The Jews however generally make use of Arabic. The national character of the inhabitants is mild; the usual dress is turkish; to which however the Europeans make an exception; for they go about in their national garb.

Two days' journey from Diabekr is the town of Mardin, on the mountain Djebel Mardin; on the summit of which are to be found the ruins of an old castle. About 50 Jewish families live here,[1] who, although they have a certain quarter of the town assigned to them for their abode, still live tolerably free. They mostly devote themselves to agriculture, dress in the Mahomedan style, and speak Arabic. Their Nassi is called Mailum Moses.

Two days' journey from Mardin is Nisibin; the Jews call the town Neitzibin, which latter name is also mentioned in the Talmud. This town, lying on the Tschak-schak, was formerly of some importance; and, according to the Targum of Jerusalem, is said to be the Arcad of the Bible. Only two[2] Jews live there now; a father and son. The father,

[1] *Ritter's Erdkunde*, Vol. 11, p. 390. Here a considerably greater number of Jews is mentioned: my assertion is however the correct one.

[2] Benjamin de Tudela, p. 51, speaks of 1000 Jews. — Pethachia, p. 193, mentions 2800; he likewise speaks p. 170 of a Synagogue of Rabbi

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Mailum Samuel, is a butcher; the name of the son is Isaac. — In the burial place, which is about an hour's journey from the town, near to which are to be seen wonderful ruins of the Roman time, is the tomb of the Rabbi Jehuda ben Betera,[1] which, as an object of general veneration, is the goal of many pilgrimages. Formerly a house stood over the grave; but it was pulled down about ten years ago by order of the new Pacha, and the stones of it used in the erection of barracks. One of the stones removed, is said, according to creditable assertion, to bear an inscription to the memory of the celebrated Talmudist; but it was impossible for me to discover it, even after a most strenuous search. A round stone about five feet high was shewn to me as his grave stone; but I could find no inscription on it. According to general belief, the Pacha was punished for this desecration by dying in the same year. In this same burial place are said to rest the remains of many Talmudists; but no monument and no historical trace justify the truth of this assertion.

Tselma. — The villages of the Jews.

Two hours' journey from Nisibin, in a south east direction, is the village of Tselma. According to ancient biblical custom, which is still always followed in the East, the village bears the name of its fonder, a Jew, celebrated and universally respected in the neighbourhood for his riches, his noble character, and his tried warlike bravery.

Jehuda ben Betera at Nisibin. — *Ritter's Erdkunde*, Vol. 11, p. 426, likewise mentions this tomb, and says, a ruin is to be found over it. But this, as above mentioned, is no longer in existence.

1 Benjamin de Tudela, p. 45, says, that the tomb of the Rabbi Jehuda ben Betera is in the village Meron in Palestine. I believe however that my assertion, according to the Talmud Pessachim Fol. 3 is more correct.

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A Pacha, who was favourably disposed towards Tselma, made him a present of considerable tract of land. Tselma built a number of houses on it, and offered these to the Arabs and Armenians, on condition, that they would cultivate his fields. Thus sprung up and encreased after a while the above mentioned village. Tselma, who, when attacked by some plundering hordes, repulsed them by his own personal courage, continued to rise more and more in the respect of the inhabitants of his village, so that he now governs there as acknowledged ruler. According to eastern custom, he has two wives, wo have borne him seven children. I remained two days in this truly patriarchal family, and enjoyed many proofs of love and sympathy. Several other brethren of my faith have likewise settled there.

The chain of mountains Djebel-Sandjack, which the people of the country believe to be the mountains of Seir,[1] extend to within an hour's journey of Tselma. Thence I made excursions into the villages, which are chiefly inhabited by Jews, and found during my visits in what deep ignorance they live. The Bible is to them a dead letter, a book with seven seals; they exercise only a few external traditional duties, without knowing or understanding their inner worth. On the Sabbath day they assemble in the Synagogue; but the Chacham, who is the only one who can read, must pray for all. He likewise reads the weekly lessons out of a printed Pentateuch, for manuscripts of the law they do not possess.

They occupy themselves chiefly in agricultural pursuits, and carry on a small trade in cattle, and weave some stuffs; few only are engaged in commerce. As they are frequently attacked by the Kurds, they know how to defend themselves, and take active part in the combats, in which the wandering hordes are ever engaged among themselves, as in fact they must be on one side or the other.

[1] I proved to them however that these traditions were certainly incorrect; as the mountains of Seir are on the southern boundary of Palestine.

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Dschesireh. — Sachu.

After a sojourn of about ten days in these villages, I came over Kusri to Dschesireh, on the Tigris, at the foot of the mountain Djebel-Djudi, which the Jews call Crez-Gezera, and which they hold to be the wilderness mentioned in the Bible.[1] I consider this opinion incorrect, although I have considered myself bound to make mention of it. — They further maintain that the mountain, called by the Arabs Djebel-Djudi, at the base of which lies the town, is the mountain Tschuk, of which the Talmudists speak.[2] Towards this part, according to their tradition, on the day of Atonement, the scape goat laden with the sins of the people was driven forth into the wilderness, but I think this untrue, considering the great distance of the mountain from Jerusalem, as, according to the same authority, that place is said only to have been six hours' journey from Jerusalem.

About 20 Jewish families live in the town,[3] of whom some are very rich.

The dress of the inhabitants is very peculiar: they wear a long silk undergarment, which by the Moors in Algiers is worn open in front; over this a vest richly embroidered in arabesques, and over this again a kind of red satin tunic without sleeves. The covering for the head consist of a high pointed felt hat, and around this pyramid formed head dress are wound different stuffs, so that it attains a very remarkable circumference. They dress in this way in summer as well as winter.

On the road from Dschesireh to Sachu one has to pass over the Tigris, for which purpose the ships I have described are used. At low water the river can be passed by a

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1 Leviticus c. XVI. 22.

2 Messechet Jona chap. 6, v. 4.

3 Benjamin de Tudela p. 52 says, that at that time there lived in Dschesireh 4000 Jews, who possessed a Synagogue, which was founded by the celebrated Author Ezra. I have heard nothing of it.

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floating bridge, which, while I was there, was carried away at high tide. In passing over an accident occurred; we came into contact with the rocks; the distended goat skins burst, and goods and chattels were all in the water; and had to be fished out again, without however having sustained other damage than a wetting. From Dschesireh the road goes in a south west direction for about 18 hours' journey. In order to arrive at the town of Sachu, the Chabur river has to be crossed, which is united to an old canal, and is passed by a brick bridge. At the gate an entry tax of 1 piastre is demanded from all strangers. On the north and west sides the town is protected by moats.

Sachu on the Chabur. About 200 Jewish families live in this town; they support themselves partly by commerce with the neighbouring Kurds, or, as workmen, manufacture woolen stuffs and such like kinds of fabrics. They are mostly wealthy, but live in a state of great ignorance.

Two Rabbis live in the town, of whom the one, Rabbi Schalom, is very rich, the second, Rabbi Eliahu, is well off. One day Mailum Eliahu summoned me to him on very important business, and on my arrival I found him leaning over the book Beth Joseph. He then told me, that a Jew, who went about in the different neighbouring villages with merchandise, had disappeared for some time. His wife considered him dead and wished to marry again. He, the Mailum, believed himself justified in giving the woman his permission; but he wished first to hear my opinion of the case. On this I remarked that as the husband might still be living, or have been obliged to adopt the Islam faith, and as in this case the woman was under the control of her husband, she ought not to contract any new marriage, as it would not be legal. — To this the Rabbi replied, that the young woman left alone, was exposed to the danger of forgetting herself. — On my further objection, that in our country no Rabbi would venture to decide such an important question without the advice of his colleagues. He replied that he was the chief Rabbi of the country; his

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orders were sufficient, and would be accepted and executed without further convocation or appeal. Thus it remained, and the woman received from him the permission of her second marriage.

Six hours' journey from the town rises the summit of a great mountain, which joins the chain of mountains of Kurdistan. The Jews believe that this is Ararat, and that here the Ark of Noah rested after the Deluge. We find in the Bible[1] the word Ararat, which the Targum Unkulus translates by Touri Kardu[2] (mountain of Kurdistan); from which the country received its name. The mountain is very steep, almost perpendicular, and it takes six hours to reach the summit. Wonderful things are her related of the Deluge. One of the Kurdish tribes annually towards the end of June, ascends the mountain, and spends there the whole day in devotional exercises, surrounded by large lighted torches. They believe themselves descended from the royal house of Sennacherib; and they retain among themselves the tradition that King Sennacherib himself had divine service performed in memory of the Ark.[3] On descending the mountain they bring with them some remains of the Ark, which, according to their assertion, is still deeply buried in the earth. The little pieces received are in the form of planks; some whitish grey; some black and pierced with holes. It is not possible for me to give a more accurate account of this Kurdish ceremony; for it did not take place during my stay; and I can only repeat what I heard in answer to my questions.

At the base of the mountain stand four stone pillars, which, according to the people about here, formerly belonged to an ancient altar. This altar is believed to be

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[1] Genesis c. VIII. 4.

[2] Pethachia p. 176 relates that many thousand Jews formerly dwelt here and describes the cause why they were driven away.

[3] The Talmud mentions and explains this under the word *„Nisroch"*, Isaiah c. XXXVII. 38.

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floating bridge, which, while I was there, was carried away at high tide. In passing over an accident occurred; we came into contact with the rocks; the distended goat skins burst, and goods and chattels were all in the water; and had to be fished out again, without however having sustained other damage than a wetting. From Dschesireh the road goes in a south west direction for about 18 hours' journey. In order to arrive at the town of Sachu, the Chabur river has to be crossed, which is united to an old canal, and is passed by a brick bridge. At the gate an entry tax of 1 piastre is demanded from all strangers. On the north and west sides the town is protected by moats.

Sachu on the Chabur. About 200 Jewish families live in this town; they support themselves partly by commerce with the neighbouring Kurds, or, as workmen, manufacture woolen stuffs and such like kinds of fabrics. They are mostly wealthy, but live in a state of great ignorance.

Two Rabbis live in the town, of whom the one, Rabbi Schalom, is very rich, the second, Rabbi Eliahu, is well off. One day Mailum Eliahu summoned me to him on very important business, and on my arrival I found him leaning over the book Beth Joseph. He then told me, that a Jew, who went about in the different neighbouring villages with merchandise, had disappeared for some time. His wife considered him dead and wished to marry again. He, the Mailum, believed himself justified in giving the woman his permission; but he wished first to hear my opinion of the case. On this I remarked that as the husband might still be living, or have been obliged to adopt the Islam faith, and as in this case the woman was under the control of her husband, she ought not to contract any new marriage, as it would not be legal. — To this the Rabbi replied, that the young woman left alone, was exposed to the danger of forgetting herself. — On my further objection, that in our country no Rabbi would venture to decide such an important question without the advice of his colleagues. He replied that he was the chief Rabbi of the country; his

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orders were sufficient, and would be accepted and executed without further convocation or appeal. Thus it remained, and the woman received from him the permission of her second marriage.

Six hours' journey from the town rises the summit of a great mountain, which joins the chain of mountains of Kurdistan. The Jews believe that this is Ararat, and that here the Ark of Noah rested after the Deluge. We find in the Bible[1] the word Ararat, which the Targum Unkulus translates by Touri Kardu[2] (mountain of Kurdistan); from which the country received its name. The mountain is very steep, almost perpendicular, and it takes six hours to reach the summit. Wonderful things are her related of the Deluge. One of the Kurdish tribes annually towards the end of June, ascends the mountain, and spends there the whole day in devotional exercises, surrounded by large lighted torches. They believe themselves descended from the royal house of Sennacherib; and they retain among themselves the tradition that King Sennacherib himself had divine service performed in memory of the Ark.[3] On descending the mountain they bring with them some remains of the Ark, which, according to their assertion, is still deeply buried in the earth. The little pieces received are in the form of planks; some whitish grey; some black and pierced with holes. It is not possible for me to give a more accurate account of this Kurdish ceremony; for it did not take place during my stay; and I can only repeat what I heard in answer to my questions.

At the base of the mountain stand four stone pillars, which, according to the people about here, formerly belonged to an ancient altar. This altar is believed to be

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[1] Genesis c. VIII. 4.

[2] Pethachia p. 176 relates that many thousand Jews formerly dwelt here and describes the cause why they were driven away.

[3] The Talmud mentions and explains this under the word „*Nisroch*", Issiah c. XXXVII. 38.

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that which Noah built on coming out of the Ark.[1] They likewise assert that his remains are buried here; they do not however specify the exact spot. I myself obtained several fragments of the Ark which appeared to be covered with a tarry kind of substance; but of these, as well as of many other things, I was robbed between Bagdad and Constantinople, three days' journey from Sivas, and twenty from Scutari. — At the same time I also lost several manuscripts written in the assyrian characters; and this grieved me more than the loss of my fortune.

CHAPTER IX.

First journey in the mountains of Kurdistan.

Reflections respecting the dispersion of the 10 tribes. — Sandur. — Deik. — Tanura. — Grotto of the Prophet Elijah. Alkusch. — Tomb of the Prophet Nahum. — Pilgrimages and ceremonies at this tomb.

On my arrival in these countries, when I saw the happy condition of the Jews who dwelt there, — their freedom from all oppression, and the flourishing state of their circumstances, — I could not get rid of the thought, that this was the land, in which the ancient dispersion of the children of Israel took place; in which, according to the words of the Bible, „they were lost." It was hither that Tiglath Pileazer had them brought;[2] and, by comparing those past times of misery and anguish with those words of Holy

[1] Genesis c. VIII. 20.
[2] II. Kings c. XV. 29.

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the condition of the people is with regard to the observation of the precepts of religion.

As a Chacham from Jerusalem I was asked my advice by a man, who accused his wife of indifference to him. On my nearer enquiry, the young woman began such a long winded tedious excuse, that is was impossible for me to understand the state of the case. I perceived however from her answer that her marriage was opposed to religious laws, and I gave her a special hearing. I asked the woman whether at her marriage she was maid, widow or divorced, to which she replied that she was neither the one nor the other, but that she was married. Her husband had gone over to the Moslem faith, and therefore she was able to marry an other. — I then turned to the accusing husband, and asked him how he had dared against all precepts and laws of religion to marry a woman whose husband was still alive, — to which he told me that his father, the Mailum of the community, had given him permission to do so.

I then sent for the Mailum, and had a discussion with him which lasted two days, in which I cited all the Mosaïc precepts applicable to the case, and tried to prove that before the second marriage, it would have been necessary to have a legal separation from the former husband. The Mailum on his part, insisted upon the force of local custom, and maintained that the woman was freed from her marriage vows in consequence of the first husband having deserted her, that the marriage contract was thereby completely dissolved, and that the union contracted by Kidduschin (putting on of the wedding ring) became invalid, as it could not be considered binding with regard to any but a member of the Jewish faith. — I however asserted that this could only be correct if the man was not originally a Jew; and my proofs and quotations brought it so far that the Mailum Manasseh and Mailum Isaac agreed with me, and as the Mailum of the community now stood alone against the general opinion, he promised to induce the first husband to consent to a divorce, which was obtained on payment of a certain sum

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the intruder from the fearful wilderness he enters, and to give him proofs of the dangers which threaten him. — The further I advanced the more difficult the journey became. For horsemen these small sloping paths are almost impassable; and I was often obliged to clamber upon my hands and feet. From time to time only a single pomegranate or figtree is to be found.

I next arrived at Sandur, where the Kurdish chain of mountains begins; about 200 Kurdish and 50 Jewish families live here.

Two days' journey from Sandur is the town of Deik, lying in a fertile valley, and surrounded by numerous springs, some of which possess mineral properties. Here dwell 40 Jewish and 280 Kurdish families.

After another two days' journey from Deik, I arrived at Tanura, a town, situated on a high hill and surrounded by mountains; it has a numerous Kurdish population, and about 30 Jewish families. Near it are two caves, the one cummunicating with the other; the first is empty, and serves as an anti-room to the second. Opposite the entrance falls from the wall a most costly curtain made of rich stuffs and embroidered with gold. In the middle of the ceiling, which is ornamented with oil-paintings, is suspended an antique chandelier, in which lights are kept continually burning, which, added to other lamps and lights in this mysterious place, shed around a solemn light, which irresistibly affects the visitor. This grotto, about which wonderful legends are told, is said, according to the traditions of the Israelites and Kurds, to have been inhabited by the Prophet Elijah. It belongs, as well as the fields surrounding it, to the Jewish community, who employ the profits arising from the produce of the fields, in keeping the grotto in proper order. It is for this purpose placed in the charge of a Mohamedan family, who as a reward for their care, are freed from paying taxes, and enjoy the highest consideration; they have from time immemorial, taken care of this sanctuary, which is likewise venerated by the Mahomedans. The alms and

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communities I was to visit, were brought in; they greeted me with tears of joy, and begged me to follow them immediately. I informed them I was ready to do so, and they departed at midnight for their own homes, in order to announce there my coming, and to send an armed escort to meet me.

In the early part of July 1848 I set off accompanied by several Jews and by some Kurds, who had hired mules for us. The difficulties and dangers of the road are indescribable. During two days we could only advance one at a time on a small narrow path, on which no ray of the sun ever shines, while the thorns tore our clothes and lacerated our feet. Hardly had we left this difficult path, when we were assailed by about 50 Kurds with whom we had a desperate skirmish; after a long and firm resistance our assailants fled, taking their wounded with them.

On the third day we came to a river, which flows at the foot of a mountain; there we wished to rest ourselves, when we perceived eight Jews, who came to meet us as emissaries; their Nassi Mailum Jehuda was among them. They lifted me on their shoulders, and thus we reached the summit of the mountain, where they set me down near a Kurdistan village. Here four Jewish families live, to whose Mailum Benjamin they conducted me. Towards evening six more emissaries arrived, under the guidance of Mailum Asunah, and the next morning several came from other villages. On my enquiries respecting divine service I found that many of their customs did not agree with the precepts of the Law, and I pointed them out to the chief Elder from whom I obtained a promise to follow out the improvements and arrangements I had suggested in this respect.

Shortly after my arrival, an event occurred which may serve to give an idea of the state of things in these countries, and which obliged me immediately to resume my journey.

In the village, a man had assumed the title of Mailum,

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being few in number they were unable to prevent our return to Birsani, at which place we arrived at the end of three days, safe but exhausted.

I had spent 55 days in these two expeditions to the Kurdistan mountains.

CHAPTER XI.

Mosul.

The ruins of Nineveh. — Tomb of the Prophet Jonah. — Erbil (Arbel). — Oppression of the Jews. — Relation of several facts.

The town of Mosul lies near the city of Nineveh, so renowned in olden times. Once more during my pilgrimage did I find myself among the shadows of the past. Great kings and mighty nations had dwelt here; cities, the enormous remains of which excite our admiration, still in their ruins baffle time, after a decay of centuries. My imagination conjured up from beneath these gigantic remains generations long since passed away, and from this solemn and noble tomb of antiquity I drew forth pictures full of strength and life.

Even to this day one can see the great extent and something of the site of the old celebrated city, whose ruins along the shore of the Tigris cover the country to within eight hours' journey of Mosul. At every footstep can be found fallen and shattered palaces and buildings formed of enormous pieces of rock of unusual height, which appear to have been raised by the hands of giants; caves of extraordinary form, and dwellings hewn out of the rock, which, according to tradition, are said to have been used as storerooms. On both shores of the Tigris stand, opposite to

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self, was a witness to these ceremonies, and can vouch for the truth of my statement.

The pilgrims bring their manuscripts of the Law with them, and deposit them in the holy shrine of the Temple. The women then enter the chamber of the Prophet; and after this the service begins. First the Book of Nahum is read aloud from an old manuscript, which is laid upon the catafalque; when this is finished, they make a solemn procession seven times round the sacred shrine, singing sacred songs. After the seventh round, a hymn is sung addressed to the Prophet, the chorus of which is, „Rejoice in the joy of the Prophet Nahum!“ — the initial letters which commence each verse follow in alphabetical order. Then come the women who do not understand Hebrew, and recite the prayers translated for them into Arabic or Kurdish, and then dance singing round the catafalque. This ceremony is gone through enthusiastically, and lasts for about an hour.

On the first evening of the Feast of Weeks, 5th of Sivan, they assemble in the Synagogue, which is lighted by about 1000 lamps, and enter the chamber of the Prophet, when service begins. Those, who are able to read, pray; the others listen with devout attention. This solemn proceeding has nothing particularly important in it; and as soon as it is over, they go without further ceremonies into the sacred house, where a festive and general entertainment takes place, at which coffee is plentifully served. At break of day morning prayer is recited; and then the men, bearing the Pentateuch before them, go, armed with guns, pistols and daggers to a mountain in the vicinity, when, in remembrance of the Law, which on this day was announced to them from Mount Sinai, they read in the Thora and go through the Mousaph prayer. With the same warlike procession they descend the mountain. The whole community breaks up at the foot, and an Arabic fantasie, a war performance, begins. The picturesque confusion, the combatants, their war cries, heard through the clouds of smoke, — the clashing of weapons and the whole mimic tumult presents

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eldest Chacham, Rachamim, the second Chacham, Sason and the third Chacham, David, are all three of the family of Birsani, who appear to have originally come from the city of that name. The ignorance and superstition of the population is extreme: a school however is established, in which the children receive religious instruction; the teacher Mordecai, son of the Chacham David, is a relation of the money changer Isaac Zellem, with whom I lodged.

Industry flourishes here; the light transparent tissues, which appear as if made by fairy hands, the celebrated muslins, bear their name from this city. Hence they were first sent to Europe, and their manufacture there attained a perfection which inhanced their price.

Mosul is like all other Arabian cities; the houses have only one story, are furnished with a terrace, and have no windows towards the street. The town is on two sides protected by mountains, while by the third side flows the Tigris, and the fourth adjoins the coast. Numerous mineral springs exhaling a strong smell of sulphur, bubble up in the vicinity. On account of the heat of the climate the day is passed in vaulted rooms situated in the court, for the same reason the water could not be used if it were not collected in cisterns, or preserved in bluish white earthenware vessels, which keep it cool and fresh. The interior of the houses is peculiar; the rooms are long and narrow; on the floor lie cushions spread on thick carpets; mattrasses are used to sleep upon. — The population consists of Turks, Jews and Armenians; next to the Turkish, the Arabian language is most generally used. Turks and Jews wear the same kind of dress, — a red fez or a coloured turban, the women an oriental head-dress, which is ornamented with gold and pearls. A long tunic covers the body, and they wear a kind of slippers; the hands and legs are decorated with rings of gold and silver, and almost all the women and many of the men wear rings in their ears and through the nose. On going out the women throw a veil over their heads.

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gave way to merriment, while the women danced to music performed by Armenians; and alms for charitable purposes and gifts for the preservation and embellishment of the chamber of the Prophet, poured richly in. When the day closed, all hurried back again to the Synagogue, in order to perform the Arwith prayer.

The belief in miracles is here almost general, and numbers many worshippers. Here the pilgrims bring their sick, and shut them up alone in the Prophet's chamber; if they surmount the fear so natural in such solitude, their cure is considered certain. For a superstitious patient such a night is often attended with the worst results; for, as tradition says, at midnight a movement is said to be perceived in the catafalque, and a large figure arises from it, who in a hollow sepulchral voice addresses the patient: „What dost thou here, and what is thy desire?“ — If the patient ventures to reply to these words without fear, he is cured instantaneously; in the other case however, he is lost. To every one in good health it is strictly forbidden to stay at midnight in this place. I wished to convince myself as to what had given rise to this superstition, and for that purpose took advantage of the tumult and confusion of the evening to furnish myself with everything necessary to oppose or prevent any imaginary fear as well as any real danger which might threaten me, and then concealed myself beneath the draperies with which the catafalque was covered. As soon as I was alone I quitted my concealment; took the manuscript, which is ascribed to the Prophet Nahum, and began to examine it; it contains nothing but the prophecy which is to be found in the Bible. — I felt myself very uncomfortable, and often ceased reading, fancying that I heard a suspicious noise, or a slight movement. Soon however I recovered my moral courage, and went on reading until I had finished the whole. The night seemed to me interminably long, and I was at some trouble to resist the drowsiness which almost overcame me; for this purpose I began to read in a book of Psalms. Wheter the oil of

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Jewess, born so, and as such I will die; never will I deny my God, my people and my faith. If you kill me, God will demand of you my blood, and the Lord will avenge me.“ — After that they seized her, killed her before the eyes of her parents by stabbing her with their knives, and then tore her in pieces. — The community desired at first to prefer a complaint before the Pacha of Bagdad and afterwards at Constantinople, but they refrained from doing so for fear of other persecutions and of a general massacre.

In the same year Rabbi Perachia, a deputy of the Portuguese Jews at Jerusalem, who was commissioned to receive the charitable alms for the poor Jews of Jerusalem, died at Erbil, and was buried with all the honours belonging to his sacred office. The night following the burial the Mussulmans tore the body out of the grave, cut off a hand, and threw the remains into an open ditch, without even a covering. The Jews repaired to the burial ground, and filled up the empty grave: that was all they ventured to do. The daily occurrence of such oppression has crushed them to such a degree, and the fear of still greater misfortune is so great, that they submit to anything without a murmur. But at the time of this occurrence several Jews from Bagdad were at Erbil, and informed the European Consuls of the matter; for the Rabbi whose grave had been desecrated, was an Austrian subject. By this means this deed of infamy came to the ears of the Pacha, who had the delinquents brought before him, and addressed them in the following words: „Do you not know that graves are prisons, in which God preserves his people until the day of judgment? Why do you not respect what belongs to Him?“ — After that judicial enquiries were instituted, and the grave-desecrators would have received the punishment they deserved, if the Jews of Erbil had not been compelled to beg that mercy might be shewn them, which was accorded.

Another proof of religious oppression causes especial astonishment, because the intolerance of the Mussulmans does not otherwise cross the threshhold of the house of God.

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CHAPTER X.

Second journey in the mountains of Kurdistan.

Akra. — Illusage of Jewish women. — Birsani. — Ascent of the mountain Zibari. — Sindu. — My illness and recovery. — Complaint of a Jew against his wife. — Dispute and arrangement of the difference. — Dangerous journey in the mountains. — The Jews there. — Threat of death and flight. — Return to Birsani.

Five days after the Feast of Weeks I started on horseback with several other pilgrims for Mosul, which I reached after a journey of two days. The portion of country through which I passed is called in the Bible in several places Assyria, a name which is used to this day in all public acts of the Jews, in marriage contracts, in divorces etc.

To my visit to Mosul I shall devote a whole chapter, and shall now only speak of the eastern parts of Kurdistan.

The journey there is even much more difficult and dangerous than that which I described in my former pages, and my Jewish brethren opposed my determination to visit these districts most strenuously; so that at last accompanied by one Kurd, I set off secretly. The journey through these inhospitable desert parts, which are made unsafe by numerous hordes of robbers, lasted three days; and on the very first day I found out how dangerous it was. The burning heat of the sun obliged me to take off a portion of my dress; when suddenly my guide sprang towards me, covered me with my clothes, and ordered me to throw myself upon the ground. The fearful Samum, the wind of the desert, of which the Bible speaks no doubt by the name of *Keteph*

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CHAPTER XII.

Third journey to the mountains of Kurdistan. — Passage over the Pirmam-mountain. — Rowandis. — Oppressed state of the Jews there; curious custom.

For the third time I ventured into these wild and dangerous mountains, into this primitive land, where the name of Europe is scarcely known, and into which only a fearless traveller, used to dangers, difficulties and deprivations of every description who devotes himself entirely to the purpose of his journey, dares to penetrate. These regions have been unexplored until now; and yet in many ways are they well deserving of investigation.

In company of a Kurdish guide I passed in two and a half days from Erbil over the Pirmam-mountain, which lies to the north of the town; it is a desert tract of land, full of cavities and hollows inhabited by robbers. I happily succeeded in surmounting all obstacles without any molestation and arrived at the town of Rowandis.

It lies on a very high mountain, at the foot of which flows the foaming stream Rowandis. The Jews of that city, in which for centuries they have only been exposed to insult and misery, having lately come under the dominion of the Turkish Government, now find their condition somewhat improved. Their dress is more decent, their houses are better built, and certainly better kept than in other parts of the mountain. Formerly they had not only to bear the whole tyranny of the Kurds, but were even sold like cattle, and attacked in that which to them is most sacred — their faith. Thus for instance on New Year's day, when the Schofar (the horn, which, according to the Mosaic law, is

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The tract of land is under the control of a Pacha from Mosul, placed there by the Turkish Government. All the inhabitants speak Kurdish, with the exception of the Cadi, who speaks Turkish. The Kurds have preserved their independance of character as well as their old habits and customs; and the only token of their subjection to the Ottoman Porte consists in their payment of a moderate tribute.

Birsani.

From Akra I proceeded over the Chair-mountain to Birsani. No caravans pass through the recesses of the mountains I wished to investigate. The locality is the most desolate and dismal that can be imagined; it is, so to say, the very heart of the deserts, little known even to the inhabitants of the country, and but seldom visited. Rocky mountains and deep hollows in which enormous hordes of robbers conceal themselves, are the principal features of this wilderness. It was only with the greatest trouble that we could advance, and we were always obliged to be on our guard, as we were not safe for a moment. At last we reached the ancient town of Birsani,[1] built on the summit of a mountain. About 200 Jewish families live here, whose Nassi is Mailum Jacob. I only remained in the town long enough to collect information respecting the community. I remarked that, according to the observance there of religious customs, there was no proper bath for the women, as is prescribed by the religious laws, and I made representation upon this subject to the Elders of the community, when it was promised that this deficiency should be supplied. The ignorance of our Jewish brethren here is so great that

[1] The town lies upon a hill between the Chair- and Zibari-Mountains.

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forbidden on festival days.[1] — I made several remonstrances concerning it, and an improvement with respect to it was promised.

Rowandis is a place engaged in agriculture; grain and cattle are the commodities of trade.

After a difficult march of two days I arrived at Choi-Sandjack to the east of Rowandis. The Jewish population there consists of about 70 families, who live in a less oppressed condition than those at Rowandis. Some of them are engaged in agricultural pursuits, and some in trade. The inhabitants of this place are more industrious than those of the former.

Thus ended my travels in Kurdistan. In my three expeditions to these wild and inhospitable regions I had exposed myself such frequent and manifold dangers, that I would not attempt impossibilities.

CHAPTER XIII.

I. Descent of the Kurdish Jews, The Nestorians. — II. Vassalage and imports. — III. Slavery. — IV. Claims of the master. — V. State of ignorance respecting religion. — VI. Industry and labour. — VII. Biblical precepts, which the Jews and other nations follow. — VIII. Review of the whole in a religious and moral point of view. Observations respecting the customs practised against the Mosaic law.

In beginning this chapter, I feel the whole importance of the task I have imposed on myself. Truth, which I have often sought at the cost of so many sacrifices, at length

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[1] Messechet Sabat p. 1. — Mischna 1. — Hallochot Sabat in the Schulchan Aruch Vol. 1, art. 339, v. 2. — Hallochot Jontoph art. 524, v. 1.

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occupy a separate quarter of the town. Their Nassi is Mailum Manasseh. Sindu lies on a plain surrounded by a chain of mountains, from which rush down numerous streams. Toil and deep privation of every description had so weakened me that I was attacked by a violent fever. — Without any medical assistance, which is there quite unknown, I could not even get any broth, for which the language of the country has no expression; and I was left solely to my own good constitution, which again helped me through. When I felt somewhat better, I was conducted one day at my desire out of the town to inhale a little fresh air. Near to the place where we were walking I observed a Jewess washing some clothes in a tank, and I asked her why she did not use for this purpose the clear water of the stream, to which she replied, that the water in the tank was hot. When the woman had left the spot, to the great astonishment of my guide, I plunged into the healing bath; by the repeated use of which for a few days I was completely restored to health. — Later I pointed out to the inhabitants of the place the great use of these warm springs; for they had no idea of the healing power of the water, and were astonished at my daily baths. — Another circumstance which greatly contributed to my recovery was an excellent medicine they brought me, consisting of some dried stalks of a plant similar in smell to the hyssop, from which I prepared an infusion which greatly benefited me. I was also told that as an effective remedy for head ache they made use of different herbs growing there, which they boiled in water; and the leaves of a certain shrub were used as a remedy for sickness. In the memorandum-book of which I was robbed, I had written down the names of these plants; but I was unable to find any more of them on my pedestrian journies.

In order to celebrate my recovery a festival was arranged by the members of the community. I then remained several days in the town, and had an opportunity of deciding a peculiar case which I relate as a proof how bad

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the ancient Nineveh, the capital of Assyria. To the authority of the Bible is annexed the testimonies of later writers and the corroborative traditions which have been handed down for centuries. I see therefore no further doubt, nay, I cherish the firm conviction that remnants of the ten tribes dwell in Kurdistan. Other well known travellers assert pretty much the same identical fact. Thus only some years since Mr. Grant, an American missionary, who investigated these regions maintained that Christians of the Nestorian sect resided at Kurdistan, adding that these Nestorians were direct descendants from the banished ten tribes of Israel, who only in later centuries had adopted the Christian faith. I rest my assertions on the following grounds:

1. Many Nestorians themselves maintain that they descend from the captive Jews, without however being able to determine either the period at which they settled or the tribe from which they spring, as all written evidence is wanting, and they themselves are too ignorant to rely on any other proofs than their own traditions.

2. The Nestorians of the places which I visited live mostly in friendly relations with the Jews; whilst with the nomadic Kurds they have no intercourse.

3. They are oppressed by the Kurds in the same way as are the Jews, which appears to be the result of the long captivity; a fall, which all banished nations carried into slavery share alike. The Nestorians assemble together for the performance of divine service in the same manner as do our brethren. They have no symbol, no cross, no bells; and their principles in this respect resemble those of the Jews. They celebrate the Sabbath. It is an historical fact that the ten tribes possessed but few learned men, and that they easily gave themselves up to strange worship, and adopted foreign customs and usages; therefore we may be well justified in the belief that these unhappy exiles, transplanted into unknown countries, and moving in a perfectly new and strange sphere, either willingly or unwillingly imitated those who had become their masters, and thus adopted

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of money. I then informed the young woman that after the divorce from her first husband, and my declaration that the second marriage was invalid, she could only marry a third husband, and left them all in a state of great satisfaction.

My weakened frame did not allow me to proceed further into the mountains, and I therefore returned to Birsani, in order to see if the promised bath for the women had been constructed. The community was assembled, the bath was soon arranged, and was solemnly consecrated; after which I made several improvements in their rites and ceremonies which were not in accordance with our customs and rules.

At the conclusion of an entertainment which was given in my honour, the chief Elder adressed me in the following words: „Chacham! thou art our teacher, thou art like a crown upon our head. The Lord hath sent thee to us, to keep us from sin, and the truth has become known to us through thy wisdom. The belief in thy high mission is the more strong in us, because thou hast refused all the presents which have been offered thee. — One favor however we pray thee to grant us, which thou canst not refuse!"

To this I answered that if it only depended on myself, I would promise to grant it, after which the chief Elder continued: „Well then, near to Urmia in the mountains, on the boundary of Lower Persia, live numerous brethren of our faith, who, ignorant as we are, share our desire for instruction, in order to advance in the path of truth. They are aware of thy presence here, and wait for thee impatiently. We pray that thou wilt not disappoint their hopes. Go, and seek them out, and thou wilt perform a work pleasing in the sight of the Most High; for it will tend to the benefit of the unhappy children of Israel."

I promised to undertake this journey, and begged for an escort; upon which twelve of the chief men, among whom was the Nassi himself, begged to be allowed to accompany me. After that four strangers, emissaries of the

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once allowing him stop to take breath. This barbarous custom is practised almost daily.

IV.

A custom, which reminds one of the old feudal barbarism of the middle ages, is the so called master's claims. — When a young Israelite or Nestorian wishes to marry, he must purchase his bride from the master to whom she belongs; for by the marriage contract the young wife comes under the control of another master, and through that, the former master suffers the loss of the yearly poll tax, for which a sum is always demanded as compensation. Besides this, the bride, before she enters the house of her husband, must place herself at the disposal of her master, which appears to have been an old custom introduced by the Orientalists; for even the Talmudists speak of it.[1]

Only within the last few years has this odious abuse been reformed, and changed into a money payment. A sanguinary event was the cause of this. A young girl, after a desperate resistance having killed her master. One abuse has therefore taken place of another: for now the master's claims must be bought off.

V.

The Jews, who inhabit the places round Kurdistan, scarcely know even the name of the Mosaic law. But very few of them can read, and their only religious knowledge consists of Kriath Schema (Schema Israel),[2] of which however they only know the first verse. For some time past bibles and prayer books have been sent to them from Bagdad. Their Mailum possess Schoulchan Aruch Beth Joseph (the collection): everything else is unknown to them, and the whole

[1] Messechet Ketubot Fol. 3. p. 2.

[2] Deuteronomy VI. 4.

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and without any authority or right officiated as slaughterer. At my suggestion he was deprived of his office. This appointment he had purchased for a yearly sum from a Kurdish chief, who now perceiving the injury done to his percuniary interest, came to me himself, and asked me who I was, and what right I had to discharge an officer appointed by him. My companions explained to him that I was a Chacham of Bet-el-Mikdass, sent out to watch over the proper administration of the religious laws among the Jews. I myself made him attentive to the fact that a Marabut, who ventured to assume this title and these functions among the Mahomedans, would certainly be immediately deprived of his office. To this the Kurd had no reply to make, further than the exclamation: „That is true, — but you have deprived me of my revenue, and you shall pay for it with your head.“ He then went out in a rage.

My companions, and those of my people who had also heard this threat, were deeply grieved; for they knew that such threats were never spoken in vain. We were immediately afterwards told by some Jews that several armed men were lying in wait for us, for the purpose of delivering up my head to their master. During the whole evening I reflected on our difficult position and the way in which we could escape the danger which threatened us. At last the following idea struck me. „Remain together“, I said to my brethren, „sing and make a noise, but bring in no light. The Kurds will have no suspicion, and my companions will escape with me.“ — My proposal was approved of; but we were not to go out all together, but two or three at a time, and then meet at an appointed spot.

Our flight happily succeeded, as we took another road through the desert and over the well wooded mountains, — but what fate befel those who remained behind, — whether their joyful songs were changed into songs of lamentation, — I dare not think.

My escape soon became known; and armed men were sent after us in all directions. Some of them met us, but

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the first right to partake of this water; the rest is divided among the women and children; and this unclean beverage is considered to be a preventive of all illnesses. Notwithstanding my opposition, I was obliged to submit myself to this extraordinary mark of respect.

On week days the men only wear a shirt with a girdle round their waist, short trousers, which only reach to the knee, and a little cap, round which is rolled a thin piece of black stuff; they likewise go barefoot. I inquired why they wore such a dress, to which I received the answer, that it was more convenient for work. This reminded me of the sacrificial garments of the priests, who, according to the Mosaic law,[1] were likewise obliged to wear such light garments, in order to be able to perform the sacrifices quickly, which the wide and inconvenient Egyptian garments would have prevented; and in order at the same time to distinguish the priests from the people; for only they were allowed to wear such a garb.

On the Sabbath they lay aside this dress, and wear a long dark robe of woolen cloth. This robe is buttoned from the neck down to the girdle, from which it falls in two large flaps down to the knees; the sleeves reach down to the wrist and are quite tight. Only the richest wear shoes, the others generally leathern sandals.

The women wear a coloured vest; round the head they fold a cloth or a piece of stuff, from beneath which their black hair falls down to the shoulders. They go barefooted, but ornament their hands, arms and feet with gold and silver rings; sometimes they wear through the nose a ring, which hangs down to the mouth.

VI.

The different woolen stuffs, which are manufactured by the Jews in Kurdistan, are likewise exported into foreign parts. This is a branch of trade, which many of them cul-

[1] Leviticus VIII. 13. XVI. 4.

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each other, the remains of two magnificent colonnades of immense stones, which are supposed to have been the gates of ancient Nineveh. Antique vases in different forms and sizes, some of them with illegible inscriptions, are to be found within three hours' journey of Mosul, indicating an origin dating up the time of the building of the Tower of Babel, or at least to the time of King Sennacharib.

The centre of ancient Nineveh is said to form a village, which is about half an hour's journey from Mosul. In this village is shewn a tomb, which the people here assert is that of the Prophet Jonah,[1] who was sent forth for the conversion of the rebellious city. The tomb lies in a court yard, in which, according to the assertion of the Mahomedans, the celebrated Kikajon (pumpkin or gourd) grows afresh every year, the leaves of which once afforded shade to the prophet.[2] The Arabs honour this tomb most devoutly, and pray there especially for their sick. The earth which covers the grave is considered sacred; and little bags containing some of it are worn round the neck, and are regarded as a very powerful talisman. The Christians as well as the Jews are forbidden to visit this grave.

In the town of Mosul dwell nearly 450 Jewish families,[3] who have no reason to complain of their condition; several among them are engaged in very extensive commercial transactions. The Synagogue is large, but contains nothing remarkable, except that behind the sacred shrine is a cave, which is said to have been inhabited by the Prophet Elijah.[4] Three Chachamim exercise the judicial and civil offices; the

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1 Benjamin de Tudela p. 44 says that the tomb of the Prophet Jonah is in Palestine, on Mount Zipore near the city.

2 Jonah c. IV. 6.

3 Benjamin de Tudela p. 52 speaks of 7000 Jews. — Pethachia p. 171 mentions 6000 Jews. — *Ritter's Erdkunde* Vol. 11, p. 211 counts according to Niebuhr 150 Jewish houses.

4 Benjamin de Tudela p. 52 speaks of three Synagogues; namely that of the Prophet Obediah, that of the Prophet Jonah, and that of the Prophet Elijah.

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baskets made of date and other leaves, and according to my view remind one of the offerings, which in olden times the Jews made to their priests.

Besides this, there are several other customs in accordance with the Bible, which are observed in a very pious manner; some of which I will mention here.

If a dead body is found in a field between two districts, the authorities of the different places around go to the spot, in order to ascertain by accurate measurement, to which city or to which village it was found nearest, and that place must pay the price of blood to the family of the deceased. If in this measurement they are not able to agree, a quarrel and fight ensues, and the place itself is often sprinkled afresh with blood.[1] — The Jews, who are obliged to take part in these combats, behave with much bravery; and when one of their own people fall, and there is no family to demand the price of blood, they carry him away, and bury him in the Jewish burial ground.

It is usual to bury the bodies found in an open field, on the spot where they are found; and this pious custom accounts for the great number of graves one meets with on the roads. They are the resting-places of those who have been struck by sudden death, among whom are many travellers and missionaries.

A custom observed throughout the whole of the East by the followers of every religious sect is, to take off the shoes on entering the house of God. This also reminds one of the precepts of the Bible. Any one who refuses to render this mark of respect is forbidden to enter the Sanctuary.[2]

One of the usages, which has been strictly followed by the Jews and Kurds from the oldest times up to the present day is the refraining from eating pork. The use of fat in general in this climate is productive of disagreeable and serious illnesses; and I have known Jews, who, from the constant use of olive oil, have been covered with boils over

[1] Deuteronomy c. XXI. 1. 2. 9.

[2] Exodus c. III. 5. — Talmud Messechet Berachot Fol. 9.

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In Mosul reside the Consuls of England and France, of whom the latter during my stay exercised much influence among the authorities. I placed myself under his protection, and confess with gratitude, that his care for me deserves all praise.

After a stay of a month at Mosul I set out with a caravan for Erbil [1] which the Jews consider to be the Resen mentioned in the Bible.[2] Midway flows the stream El Kebir, which forms the boundary between the Pachalic of Mosul and Bagdad: it is a mighty rushing stream, which empties itself into the Tigris. The water abounds with an immense number of a reddish kind of fish, said to be excellent eating; some of them attain a weight of 200 lbs.

Erbil is divided into two parts; of which the one lying on the mountain is the city, the other, in the vast plain is the seat of trade and industry. One hundred and fifty Jewish families dwell here, whose Nassi is Mailum Mordecai; they are however much oppressed by the fanatic, rude and half civilised sects of Allah, of which I will relate some examples.

A short time before my arrival a Jewish girl emptying some dirty water into the street, accidentally besprinkled with it a Mussulman who happened to be passing by. Immediately a crowd assembled before the house, broke open the door, seized the girl, and heaped upon her all kinds of threatening abuse; asking her how she, the daughter of an accursed race, dare presume to insult a true believer. The girl defended herself to the best of her ability, but the leader of the uproar cried out to her: „There is only one way for thy escape, embrace our faith, and thou shalt marry one of our people, who is young, handsome, rich, and of a good family.“ But the girl refused and answered: „I am a

[1] Benjamin de Tudela p. 52 says that Erbil is an hour's journey from Mosul. I do not know however which road the traveller could have taken, as by the nearest route it is two days' journey.

[2] Genesis c. X. 12. According to Benjamin de Tudela p. 64 this town lies near to Bagdad, at two days' journey's distance from it.

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visited hundreds of families living scattered in these mountains, and did not find one, which could escape from this unendurable existence. I cannot express what I felt at the sight of all this misery, — for their low condition and their afflictions are indescribable. — From attacks without they are sometimes powerfully protected; but this does not arise from generosity or from love of justice; but is solely attributable to the advantage and personal interest of their selfish Kurdish masters.

In the districts of Kurdistan, which is now under the dominion of the Sublime Port, the condition of the Jews is somewhat more bearable. — The Muslem appointed by the government have abolished slavery; the poll tax goes direct into the hands of the Pacha.

But the hour of justice and humanity for these unhappy ones is not yet come. When I was obliged suddenly to give up my second journey to the mountains of Kurdistan, and to leave my brethren there to save my own life, I was surrounded by the deputies of four cities and of about thirty other places, which I had the intention to visit. — How many others may there be in the other parts of this barbarous country, whose existence is hitherto unknown to the investigator and to the world; — and who can tell how long this state of seclusion may still last!

In paragraph VII. I have mentioned several biblical precepts which are observed in the East; and here, in conclusion, I add a number of customs, which contrary to the Mosaic law, have been interwoven since the remotest time with the habits of these tribes.

In the account of my journey through Lebanon I mentioned the immoral customs practised among the Druse tribes living there, to which I here again refer.

The slave trade, that moral pest of the East, is carried

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The Jews of the lower part of the town had erected a new Synagogue, and wished to convey solemnly into it, according to custom, the manuscripts of the Law. On the road they were attacked by Mussulmans, several of them killed, others wounded, and the new Synagogue pulled down. Since then a second Temple has been built; but at the solemn conveyance of the Pentateuch into it, the same scenes have been repeated.

I myself was a witness to the last disturbance, and can with justice proclaim the state of my brethren in Erbil to be a most unbearable one. They find a feeble compensation in unrestricted freedom of trade, for therein they are perfectly free and unmolested. All are sunk into a state of great ignorance: the Schochet is the chief of the community.

The dress, customs and language of the inhabitants of Erbil resemble those of Mosul; the Jews speak Arabic.

After resting for several days I made the resolution of investigating the north-west part of the mountains of Kurdistan towards Persia, and of going through a number of Jewish and Kurdish tribes, which had never been visited by an European. Sometimes Chachamim from Jerusalem go there; but the greater number of these pilgrims fall victims to their courage and devotion.

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complete morass, which no one ventures to enter. The houses are kept somewhat cleaner, and the food is prepared better than in Kurdistan.

The vicinity of Kirkuk is very fertile, and, being well irrigated, only needs a skilful cultivation. The inhabitants carry on a considerable trade in thread and cotton goods. The language of the country is Arabic; the dress generally worn is the Mahomedan.

Towards the months of November and December whole flights of quails come from different parts and alight here; they are about as large as a chicken when a week old, and cannot fly well. For this reason they are so easily caught, and taken in such great numbers, that they are sold for 2 paras (half a farthing) each. The Jews, as well as the other inhabitants of the place, eat these birds, and I myself did so; but their flavour is only good when they are young.

Another extraordinary appearance which reminds one of the journey of the Jews through the wilderness, is the manna which here, in the form of grain, descends with the dew. The grain is of a whitish colour, and hard to the touch. It is collected in vessels at break of day, and placed in the sun; in the warmth of which it melts, and becomes a cheesy kind of substance in which state it is spread upon bread and eaten at breakfast. I found it sweet, like honey, and of an agreeable smell. The manna, which falls in the vicinity of Mount Sinai, which I have also tried, tastes still better; it is likewise placed in the sun to dissolve, whereby it becomes hard like cooked honey. Manna is also found in the neighbourhood of Mosul and Bagdad; but there only the trees are covered, whilst at Kirkuk, all the fields and meadows are strewed with it.

Another natural production which is of great use to the inhabitants, and likewise forms an article of foreign trade, is naphtha. The numerous swamps and ditches are covered with a thin blackish fluid, which is collected by the inhabitants, and represents naphtha in its natural state: it is

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blown on New Year's day) sounded in the Synagogue, the Kurds rushed into the Temple attacked the women and maltreated them, broke the symbolic trumpet, and compelled the Jews to desist from their ceremony. The Turkish Government has put a stop to such tumult and disorder; but in the more remote villages, where it is more difficult to watch over them, the Jews still have to endure every kind of bad treatment, although not sold as slaves. In many towns and in Rowandis, which, as I have already mentioned, is under the Turkish Government, are still to be found, remains of the old oppression — vassalage — in some cases with the knowledge of the Mutesellim (burgomaster), though the Pacha dwelling in Bagdad knows nothing of it. The Turkish chiefs compel men and women to break stones, to burn lime, mould tiles &c. and all this to the glory of the Lord. Our poor brethren think that it is their destiny to suffer, and submit patiently to their fate; the slighest amelioration of which they consider an unexpected happiness. Some of them enjoy a certain degree of opulence; and in particular the Nassi of the place, Mailum Nissim, is rich in landed property and herds, besides having two wives and several children. The Jewish population on the whole is very ignorant, and has no Rabbi; the son in law of the Nassi, the Schochet Mailum Samuel, certainly bears the title of Rabbi, but understands at most only how to superintend divine service in the Synagogue. Only the Rabbi prays aloud, so that the prayer Schemone Ezra, which as is known, is first repeated by every member of the congregation to himself, and is then repeated aloud by the Rabbi, is there only recited once by the Rabbi.

An other curious custom is that on New Year's day, after the ceremony of the Taschlich (prayer at the waters), they go to the stream flowing at the foot of the mountain, recite there the prayer, and throw themselves into the water and swim about. They imagine that by this bath they are cleansed from all their sins, quite forgetting the new sin they commit in taking the bath itself; as such an act is

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Perhaps the assertion of the inhabitants of Kirkuk is correct; as it dates from a tradition of the oldest times.

The tombs are in a state of good preservation, and but a short time since were ornamented with magnificent embroidred tapestries. The inhabitants, no matter what is their religion, make pilgrimages to them with the greatest respect. The Jews go there on the first day of the Feast of weeks, the 6th Sivan (May), in order to recite the Mussaph prayer; but they could give me no other reason for this custom, than its ancient usage.

The belief in miracles, and superstition, of which the east has even been the cradle, finds more followers here than in any other place. These tombs are said to possess a miraculous healing power over all kinds of diseases; — men likewise flee to them for their mysterious interposition in the good result of important undertakings, and call upon them as guardian angels in all affairs of life. This general adoration has an advantageous influence on the condition of the Jews living in the district sanctified by the protection of the tombs of Daniel and of his companions; for they are much less tormented and oppressed by the half civilised inhabitants, than they are in other places.

After leaving Kirkuk, my road led me through a desolate and dreary wilderness. Immeasurable tracts of land without the least sign of vegetation, reaching as far as the eye can see, and always extending further towards the horizon the nearer one approaches, — drifting sand, raised by the slightest breath of air and forming hills, which are just as quickly dispersed, — a moving sea of dust, in which a caravan is seldom met, — this is a picture of the tracts of land through which I had to travel. Whole caravans are frequently stopped by billows of sand, which like the tide of the sea, ebb and flow; half covered over they often wait for a favorable breeze, a burning blast from the desert, which ends their halt.

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appears to glimmer before me, and the darkness, which has so long rested on the past of the lost ten tribes of Israel, begins to disappear. But again almost insurmountable difficulties rise up before me, caused by the want of every historical vestige and record which could offer certain evidence, undiscoverable until now. In the absence of such proofs I have collected together my own researches and observations, and through them have arrived at some conscientious conclusions, which, to me, have assumed the value of authentic facts. — After my second journey — which by God's help I shall soon undertake — I hope by more accurate researches to render them more clear and complete.

I.

If one gives credence to the Jews and Nestorians, their settlement in these countries took place before the destruction of the first Temple.[1] The same traditions are everywhere preserved, and they assert, that the ancestors of our brethren, banished to these lands, remained there after the Assyrian captivity, and did not again return to Palestine. From this it follows, that they descend direct from the ten tribes of Israel, who were transplanted here by the Assyrian kings from their own country. We find a proof of this in the history of the Kings, where it is related, that in the days of Pekah, king of Israel, the Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser took possession of a portion of the kingdom of Israel, and carried away its inhabitans as captives into Assyria.[2] It is more than probable that Kurdistan, a country bordering on Assyria, formed a part of that great Assyrian kingdom; for to this day it belongs to the Pachalic of Mosul, the capital of which, bearing the same name, joins

[1] Benjamin de Tudela p. 77 says the same. — The book Derech Emed Fol. 15, p. 1 translates the word Touri Kardu by „dark mountains"; from which perhaps originates the tradition of the Jews, that the banished ten tribes lived in the dark mountains.

[2] II. Kings XV. 29.

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CHAPTER XV.

Bagdad.[1]

The Jews of Bagdad and their happy condition; their sciences and government. — Synagogue. — Marriage customs. — Tomb of the Marabut Abd-el-Kader. — Supposed tomb of the priest Joshua. — General description of the town, trade and habits. — The ruins of Babylon. — Hillah. — Birs Nimrod (tower of Nimrod).

The Jewish population of Bagdad numbers about 3000 families. By their science, industry and opulence they contribute much to the progress of trade, to general activity,

[1] Kayserling, P. Teixeira: We now enter with Teixeira into Bagdad, into this highly favoured city, large, rich and magnificent, with its beautiful women, whose eyes particularly pleased our traveller. Bagdad had, in his time, above 20,000 houses (casas), of which 200—300 were inhabited by Jews. Twelve or thirteen of these Jewish families asserted that their forefathers were transplanted here at the time of the destruction of the first Temple. The Jews of Bagdad of whom some carry on trade, and are very poor, live in a certain part of the town with their Kanis or Synagogue — perhaps the Kenisa „gdolah des Rosch Hagolah", which Benjamin de Tudela mentions*) — in free excercise of their religion. So far Teixeira. — If we compare the numbers given by him with the accounts of Benjamin de Tudela, and of him of the Moldau, we come to the conclusion, that the Jewish population of Bagdad in his time must have been very low. Benjamin de Tudela found 1000 families,**) and Teixeira men-

*) *Teixeira, 121: Haura de doscientas a tres cientas casas de Judios, de que las 12 o 13 affirman que son aun del primero captiuerio, algunos dellos son facultosos, peró los mas pobriscimos; biuen en barrio separado con su Kanis o Synagoga libremente.* At that time Bagdad had 10 Armenian Christian families and 80 Nestorians.

**) Benjamin de Tudela 59. 60.

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their customs, manners and habits, particularly as being slaves, they were obliged to obey. Thus it is quite possible that up to a certain extent the Jews have mixed and could mix with the primitive nations of Kurdistan. — I myself hold them to be the descendants of the tribes of Zebulun and Naphthali. (See II. Kings XV. 29. Isaiah IX. 1.)

Kurdistan belongs more in name than in fact to the Turkish kingdom. The inhabitants of the mountains entrenched behind those walls with which nature has provided them, hold fast to their peculiar habits and customs, laws and traditions. Thus they adher to their own life of freedom, paying the Sultan a small yearly tribute, and that only of their own accord. They form a kind of union of independent tribes, each governed by its own chief. These tribes again divide themselves into families, and live generally in sanguinary skirmishes and feuds with each other.

II.

The Jews scattered here and there, and compelled to remain at the places assigned to them, are in the true sense of the word, surrounded by tribes of savages. One often finds five, ten, or even twenty Jewish families the property of one Kurd, by whom they are laden with imposts, and subjected to illtreatment. Heavy taxes are imposed upon them, which, for the poorest amount annually to 500 piastres. Finally they are compelled at different periods of the year to perform serf-service, to cultivate their master's field, without receiving or being able to demand the smallest compensation for their labour.

III.

The master has the absolute power of life and death over his slaves; at his will he can sell them to another master, either in whole families or individually. If a gentleman on horseback meets a Jew or a Nestorian on the road, he makes him run before him to the stable door, without even

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are not however able to determine any punishment, as this power is possessed only by the Chacham Baschi (chief Rabbi). The Chacham Baschi is appointed direct to this dignified office by the Sublime Porte. He represents the community before the highest authorities, and watches over their religious interests and the administration of civil affairs. He collects from the Jews the taxes, for which they are in arrears. Every male member of the community pays, from the time he arrives at the age of fifteen, a yearly tribute of 15 to 120 piastres, which is collected in quarterly payments.

The Chacham Baschi is supported in his office by the highest members of the community; and it is necessary that their opinions should agree with his own, in order to establish the validity of his acts. In my time, this honorable appointment was held by Rabbi Raphael Kassin of Aleppo, a man about 30 years of age, of stately figure and noble appearance, wearing a long black beard. He enjoys the especial favour of the Pacha, who has assigned him a guard of honour consisting of four Gavaz (gendarmes), and besides these, five or six Jews are in attendance on him, who have to convey and execute his orders and commands. When he goes out, it is always with truly princely pomp, and the guard of honour preceeds him on horseback. As a mark of high consideration and respect, he wears the decoration of the imperial order of the Nissan, a distinction, of which very few Jews in the Ottoman empire can boast.

Under the orders of the Chacham Baschi the community is presided over by the Nassi. Up to the year 1849 to 50 Rabbi Joseph Moses Reuben, a very rich learned and benevolent man, was the Nassi of the community. He did me the honour to invite me several times to his table. Before the appointment of the high office of Chacham the Baschi, the Nassi was always chosen from among the richest and most influential Jews. He possessed much power, which, if abused, might have been productive of serious consequences, not only among those of his own persuasion, but likewise among the Mussulmans; for as he was only

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of their divine service is comprised in some performance of ancient ceremonies which are mechanically and superstitiously gone through.

I have here to mention an old traditional custom, which is observed in Kurdistan, as well as in the whole of the East. When a woman approaches the time of her confinement, sweet smelling herbs are strewn on a pan of burning coals, with which first the Synagogue and then the chamber, in which the mother expectant is lying, are fumigated. The Kurdish Israelites say that thus they present to the Lord a well pleasing sacrifice, and that the offering itself, the perfume, ascends as in the Temple at Jerusalem. True it is that the Talmudists speak of it, and mention a mill at Burne, in which different sweet smelling ingredients were ground. In the Messechet Sanhedrin chap. 4, fol. 29, p. 2, Raschi explains the text, adding that sweet smelling herbs were used to cure the wound caused by circumcision. Thus in the same Messechet is to be found the expression Schewua habben (week of the son); and this expression may well be the same as that which is at this time used, and the pronunciation only of which differs somewhat from the above mentioned. For during the space of a whole week, from the birth to the circumcision of the son, the father is called Avi habben (father of the son), and is received in the Israelitish families, as well as in the Synagogue, with marks of honour. In our time the use of the herbs is different; but they are still used as incense. — This proves that a very ancient custom has been observed among the Israelites in the East up to the present day.

When a Chacham from Jerusalem comes into these parts, which occurs but very seldom, they go out solemnly to meet him, kiss his shoulders, his beard, and even his feet, according to the rank of him by whom he is saluted; they then carry him in triumph to the house of the Nassi, bare his feet and wash them, and the water used for that purpose is collected for drinking. I do not exaggerate anything in this account. The highest people of the place have

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of a man, decorated with flags of four colours at which ten learned Rabbis are always reading and reciting prayers.

On Friday afternoon between two and three o'clock, all business ceases among the Jews of Bagdad, and all the commercial houses are closed. Each returns to his own home, puts on his best garments, and hurries to the Synagogue, where evening service is performed, which lasts until an hour before sunset. All then return to their families, sing pious Hebrew songs, and drink aniseed brandy. As soon as the last rays of the sun have disappeared, the Kriath Schema is said; and they then partake of the evening meal, which sometimes lasts until midnight. On Saturday, they go to the morning service, afterwards breakfast, and then religious reading commences and with such decorum and devotion that even every casual listener must be edified. Several families are usually assembled at these readings, which are generally taken from the Prophets. Every member of the family listens with much devotion, and the strangers who happen to be present follow this example. After the reading there is an interchange of visits, and the afternoon is devoted to enjoyment in the open air. The rich possess beautiful country houses and palmgardens on the Tigris, where they spend the summer.

With feelings of the highest satisfaction and pleasure I saw how devoutly and solemnly, and with what strict attention to the precepts of the Law, the Sabbath was observed in Bagdad. With true delight did I assist at the readings and brotherly meetings, where pleasure was always enhanced by true and deep knowledge. In no other country I visited did I find my brethren in the faith so void of care, so happy, so free from persecutions and oppressions of intolerance, as at Bagdad. Often when looking with sorrow at the misery and profound ignorance of my brethren, when I saw how under the yoke of despotism they wandered like mere shadows of that once celebrated, great and learned people and compared their condition with that of their brethren in Bagdad, then the hope took possession of me,

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tivate most industriously. They likewise manufacture carpets. Their looms are extremely simple: on two pieces of wood, which are placed in the ground, at a certain distance from each other, they make good and even beautiful stuffs. A portion of the higher classes devote themselves to the culture of the soil; one sees them going in the morning with their wives and children into the fields and vineyards, whence they only return in the evening. Instead of pressing the grapes, they satisfy themselves with drying them for their own use. The harvest is sufficient for their necessary wants, and but few fruit trees are planted.

The houses constructed of wicker work, have a very bare appearance; they are tolerably high, have one story, and inside and outside are plastered with a kind of mortar. In summer they sleep upon the terraces, in order to escape the bites of scorpions, which, during this period of the year, are frequently to be found in the houses at night. Food is so badly prepared, that it would excite the disgust of the poorest European.

VII.

Wherever I went during vintage and harvest time, I found a custom strictly observed by the Jews and Kurds, which reminded me of the precepts of the Bible.[1] Neither the ears of corn, nor the grapes nor fruits are wholly collected; but the portion of the widows and orphans is always left: it is even allowed to go into a ripe cornfield, to *break* the sheaves, and on the spot to boil the corn in water; but the ears of corn must not be cut,[2] neither may they be taken away. In the same way grapes are allowed to be gathered in the vineyards, and to be eaten there.[3]

The first fruits of all kinds, which the Jews present to their Mailum, and the Turks to their Cadi, are placed in

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[1] Leviticus c. XIX. 9. 10.

[2] Deuteronomy c. XXIII. 26.

[3] Deuteronomy c. XXIII. 25.

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all hopes of being married at all. So it is with wido they have no chance of a second marriage; as every would prefer to marry a poor girl than a young and pr widow, be she ever so rich: and I was informed that Jewish community alone numbered about 4—500 widow

The marriage ceremonies are as follows: When a n wishes to marry, it is not the custom, as with us, that should previously be acquainted with his future wife; the mother, or some other female relation, goes and lo at the girl, and if she pleases her, the husband must pleased also.

The night before the wedding is called Lel-al-Cha (the Arabic word „Lel“ means *night*, and „Chana“ is a r colour). The relations of the bride assemble in the hou of her parents, and begin to sing and play music accordi to the custom of the country. After spending about tw hours in this way, a colour (Chana), prepared for the pu pose, is taken, and they paint with it the palms of t hands and the nails of the bride and her attendant maider and the soles of their feet up to the toes. The paint washed off the next morning, when a little dark reddi colouring will denote for the space of several weeks t places marked. This same ceremony is gone through wi the bridegroom and with his companions at his house; a then in both houses the night is spent in singing and musi as it is considered injurious for the bride and bridegroo to sleep the night before the wedding. I was present the ceremony at both houses; and must confess that it mu pleased me.

The next day about three hours before sunset come t Chachamim with the bridegroom and his relations to t house of the bride, and the preparations for the weddi are begun. The bride sits veiled with the women behind curtain. The Chacham lifts the veil from the face of t bride, and shows her to the bridegroom, as, according the Talmud, the marriage ceremony dare not take pla

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the whole of the body; and sometimes the skin of the head is coated with a kind of scab, with which this disease has much similarity.

VIII.

The condition of the Jews in a religious, moral and social point of view is as follows: Their ignorance with regard to religion excites commiseration. Few among them can read or write, and in this they are far behind all our other brethren in the faith whom I have met on my travels. Some Bibles and prayer books are certainly to be found in these desolate mountains; but few understand the use of them, and fewer still how to perform their devotions. The elementary notions, and the knowledge of the grand ideas of their forefathers and brethren, are completely wanting in them; and in many places they have never even seen a Pentateuch.

Tradition only has preserved the celebration of the Sabbath and biblical festivals, as well as circumcision and the slaughtering of animals; — but these sacred customs are performed so imperfectly and mechanically, that it can be distinctly seen that they neither know the purpose or the reason of them, and are utterly ignorant of what they are doing.

In a social point of view their condition is deplorable; for the greater number live in a state of most oppressed slavery. The Kurd owns no master; and in his stupidity and brutality assumes to himself the most overbearing rights, which no one can dispute with him. He acts as uncontrolled master over the property, life, and even the feelings of his Jewish slaves. The Nestorians are quite in the same condition as the Jews.

The poll tax, an unbearable burden, is not enough, — any trifling circumstance, any and every excuse is sufficient to alarm and disturb the existence of these unfortunate beings. They are illused, sold, and murdered, just as the master pleases. They eat the bitter bread of exile, and moisten it with their tears and with their blood. I have

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When the water is very high they make use of a peculiar kind of boat to pass over, which consists of a kind of deep basket, made of wicker work, and covered over with pitch; for the same purpose they make use of canoes, which are made in two divisions, and each capable of containing 8—10 persons. Going along the streets towards the Jewish quarter of the town, I passed a mosque of imposing appearance, enclosed by a wall. In this mosque is the tomb of the great Marabut Abd-el-Kader, which is visited by numerous pilgrims. Tradition relates that the mosque was formerly a synagogue, and that the Marabut was no less a person than the celebrated Talmudist Joseh Haguelili.

In Bagdad the heat in summer is unbearable, so that one is obliged to remain at home during the day, and to attend to business at night. On account of the heat subterranean grottoes have been constructed, which are kept cool by reservoirs of water. In the summer one sleeps on the terraces, in order to avoid the smothering heat of the rooms, and the stings of scorpions. These scorpions are real plagues to the country; they are everywhere to be found here, and particularly in the narrow streets, where at night it is necessary to be furnished with a lantern in order to be able to get out of their way. The scorpions here are of different kinds and colours, they are black, blue, and green; the sting of the black scorpion is deadly, and up to this time no remedy for it has been discovered. For the stings of the other species the following remedies are used: 1) A little flat blackish-blue stone is laid upon the wound, and there remains for 24 hours, until the poison is drawn out. 2) A scorpion is boiled in olive oil and laid upon the wound; if the same scorpion that caused the wound can be obtained for that purpose, the cure is the more certain. 3) A sheep is slaughtered, the inside taken out, and the wounded member placed in the body of the still warm animal. 4) The poison may be sucked out of the wound by a strong man, a process which for him has no danger. 5) And lastly, ice applications are put on the wounded part. All

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on to a great extent, and is an essential part of the customs of these tribes.

In a word, all that our great Lawgiver forbade, the evil he foresaw and pointed out, and from which he wished to preserve our forefathers, rages to this day among these people. — Those who wish to understand the Bible and the Talmud, should first journey through the East and investigate it; — many a dark passage would then appear to them in the clearest light. I intend later perhaps to explain some points of the Talmud, which to a certain extent appear difficult.

CHAPTER XIV.

Manna. — The quails. — Naphtha (mountain oil). — Tombs of the Prophets Daniel, Ananias, Misael and Azarias. — Ceremonies and customs at these tombs. — Journey through the desert.

The town of Kirkuk on the Chaffeh sea is by the Jews considered to be the ancient Calah [1] mentioned in the Bible, and this name is used to this day in all their public documents. The town is divided into two parts; of which the one is fortified, and situated on the summit of the mountain, and the other extends over the plain. The flat part of the town is the place for commerce; and there our brethren in the faith reside.

The town presents an appearance which is unique of its kind. Hardly could a more ill shaped heap of stones be found sunk in a swamp, which, during the rainy season, is quite covered with water. The town appears then but a

[1] Genesis c. X. 11.

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ralds, and corals; and from the Island Rein in the Persian Gulf beautiful pearls are procured.

The larger ships containing articles of Jewish manufacture go to Mascat, Abeshur, and Bassora; in the latter place they unlade, and wait for smaller ships to take their cargo on farther. — The steam-boat between India and Abeshur only goes once in six weeks.

In the year 1841 Bagdad was visited by the plague, which caused fearful ravages; many persons died, and many thousands left the town. A second misfortune, which visited the town in the same year, was the overflowing of the Tigris, by which many houses were inundated or destroyed.

According to the prevailing custom of the East the houses are always kept closed. If a stranger knocks at a door, and a woman opens it for him, she immediately turns aside, hides her face, and hurries timidly away. According to the Arabian style of building, the houses have a court-yard in their centre, round which the dwelling is erected. The kitchen is on the ground-floor, and the women live in the first story. A stranger may live several months in a house without once seeing the female members of the household: as soon however as he is known, he is treated with familiarity. Deprived of all society and amusement, the women have no idea of free and social propriety, they possess no knowledge which might serve to control their passions, and they readily surrender themselves to any one with all the vehemence of their warm temperament. Whenever they appear in the street, they are wrapped in a long veil, from beneath which only gleam their sparkling eyes, which look boldly on the passers-by.

One day I had a conversation with some worthy gentlemen, during which I was asked, if it were really true that the women in Europe were free, and showed themselves unveiled in public. On my replying in the affirmative, they explained to me that it was the destiny of the daughters of Eve to lead a retired life, and their faces ought to be veiled before strangers, and particularly before men. To this I

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used for lighthing and other purposes, and has, in burning, a very disagreeable smell.[1]

Between the upper and lower town, at the foot of the mountain, stands a building in the middle of the courtyard, containing four tombs. The first of these, to the left of the entrance near the wall is, according to the assertion of the inhabitants, the tomb of the Prophet Daniel, while the other three tombs, which lie at some little distance, and are separated from each other, are considered to be those of the Prophets Misael, Azarias and Ananias.[2] They are small square sarcophagi, covered with a roof, and protected by a wall of wood, which is in tolerably good condition, although it bears the traces of great age. The three companions of Daniel were, according to the Bible, cast by Nebuchadnezzar into a fiery furnace, from which they came out unhurt.[3] Illegible inscriptions cover these three sarcophagi, but none is to be observed on the tomb of Daniel. I myself doubt the indentity of this tomb, as Daniel is said to have died and to have been buried in Persia; but still I do not venture to assert anything positively, as, notwithstanding the most accurate investigation, I could neither discover the spot mentioned, nor the least trace of his tomb.

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[1] It is possible that this is the naphtha of which the Talmudists speak in the Messechet Sabath (div. 2). See *Ritter's Erdkunde* vol. 9. book 3, p. 555.

[2] Benjamin de Tudela p. 68 likewise speaks of these tombs; but says that they are situated an hour's journey from the tomb of the Prophet Ezechiel, of which we speak later. The tomb of Daniel he places at Schuschan. — Petachia p. 183 says the same. — In *Ritter's Erdkunde* Vol. 9, book 3, p. 583 the description of the four tombs corresponds with my account. P. 294 — 308 the same book says that the tomb of Daniel is in the bed of a river near Suschan or Susa. The river was diverted from its course, a tomb of stones built out in its bed, and then the river allowed to flow back again. Tudela's assertion that Daniel's coffin hangs in a glass case by a chain in the middle of the bridge, is, p. 306, declared incorrect.

[3] Seder Hadoroth p. 36.

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read at his tomb; they contain a narrative of his hi
which is to be found in the writings of the Prophet Zech
The interior of the vaulted tomb is lighted by a
narrow window. The Jews go there every month, in
to hear the writings of the High-Priest read; after the
clusion of which they join in singing hymns, and
assemble at some distance from the tomb, and partal
a social meal.

The ruins of Babylon. — Hillah.

The ruins of Babylon begin two and a half days'
ney to the northwest of Bagdad, and stretch along
shores of the Euphrates to the town of Hillah,[1] which i
the distance of six hours' journey. Where once stood
ancient celebrated city of Babylon, is now a dreary w
only relieved by a few miserable plantations near the t
of the Bedouins.

A deep religious feeling must take possession of any
who contemplates these magnificent ruins, these delapid
remains of palaces, monuments, columns, and edifices, wl
even in ruin give evidence of their former splendour.
to this day are still found many costly articles under tl
fragments, — antique vases, and gold and silver coins
myself possessed four coins, of which however I was rob
as well as of other things.

In the vicinity is to be seen a cave, into which i
asserted, Daniel was thrown to the lions, and likewise

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[1] Kayserling, P. Teixeira: Not far from Hela he trod the soil of M
potamia. From afar he perceived the ruins of ancient Babylon,
this place of all others in the vicinity is the most seldom vis
a fulfilment of the words spoken by the Prophet." *)

*) *Teix. c. III: es el lugar menos frequentado de toda aquella re
en complimiento de lo que della estaua prophetizado. (Isaiah, c.
19, 20 ff.).*

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A few poor villages and scattered Arab tents, which are to be found in the sandy desert, refresh the eye, fatigued by the monotony of the scene. The scorching rays of the sun make it impossible to travel during the day time: at sun-rise therefore we pitched our tents, reposed until night, and made use of the cool hours for continuing our journey.

For seven days we had to travel through the desert tracts; until finally, three days' journey before the old caliph's town of Bagdad, one arrives at an enormous palm forest, which extends to within a short distance of the town. One must have travelled through a desert, in order to conceive what the wanderer feels at the sight of fresh luxuriant nature, bright in all the glowing richness of vegetation, when, exhausted by fatigue, scorched by the burning rays of the sun, the eye wearied by the glaring yellow sand of the monotonous desert, he enters the forest shades. He feels as if newborn, and begins to hope that he is now approaching places where he will meet with fellow creatures.

On quitting this forest, which always affords refreshing shades, are to be seen on the horizon the slender minarets and the proud majestic domes of the Mosques of Bagdad, the white lines of which stand out in strong relief against the azure blue of the sky. To the right and left the town appears to be encircled by a glittering girdle, which is formed by the waters of the rapid and foaming Tigris.

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50 Jewish families live here, whose Nassi is Mailum Mordecai. This little community possesses a Synagogue.[1] In Hillah, different kinds of stuffs are manufactured, which are used in the country itself. The town is likewise celebrated for rearing the best Arab horses.

From Hillah to Kabur-Kefil is a journey of about six hours. Near the latter place I found in the middle of the desert, upon a hill, a small pyramidal-tower. It is arched and contains a subterranean apartment, which leads into a grotto. This tower, which is called by the Arabs Birs Nimrod, is of great antiquity, and, according to tradition, is said to have belonged to the hunter Nimrod, and to have been inhabited by him.

At first he thinks of Hela,*) mentioned by Tudela as Chila and Hillah,**) the place which the children of Israel passed, when they were led captive to Babylon. The fields of this part lying on the shores of the Euphrates are all intersected by small streams, — „those were the streams of which the Psalmist speaks in his writings.“ †) Teixeira made no stay at this place, and does not speak of the Jews here, of whom Benjamin de Tudela found 10,000.

[1] Benjamin de Tudela p. 65 mentions 10,000 Jews and 4 Synagogues. With respect to several other towns, of which we will speak later, he mentions a population of several thousand Jews, of whom now no traces are to be found.

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*) *Teixeira c. III.: por do los hijos de Israel passaron cautivos para Babylonia.* We should be indeed inclined to consider the ancient Halah (II. Kings c. XVII. 6, c. XVIII. 11), Helah to be Hela-Hillah. Teixeira does not mention whether his account is a tradition which the experience of the inhabitants has proved, it certainly however agrees with Holy Writ, as II. Kings c. XVIII. 11 it stands thus: „*wajanchem ba — Halach*“ and he carried away etc. The Talmudists were perfectly acquainted with the situation of Halach, which (according to Gesenius) is the identical Helach (Genesis c. X. 11); and they quite agree with the account of our journey. Talmud babli, Joma 10a it stands thus: Helach su Phrat d'bursif. (Helach is the neighbourhood of the Euphrates in the part near Bursif). Now Bursif (Borsippa) is known to be the same as Babel; and thereby it is proved that Halach lay on the site of the present Hela, or Hillah.

**) Benjamin de Tudela 65.

†) *Ibid. 111: aquellos heran los Rios de que el Psalmista, haze mencion en su Psalmo.* (Psalm 137.)

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and to the flourishing condition of this important province. Merchants of the first rank are to be found among them, who extend their commercial transactions into the remotest countries, and labour with success not only against the competition of the natives, but likewise against that of foreign lands. In no other place in the east have I found my Israelitish brethren in such perfectly happy circumstances, and so worthy of their condition. With respect to superstition, the fruit of ignorance, and the result of the numerous traditions, which people of the east imbibe from their earliest youth, — the Bagdad Jews may be considered the ideal of the Jewish population of the east. They have noble principles, are hospitable, enlightened and benevolent to all those with whom they come in contact. By continual intercourse with strangers, they have acquired good manners and politeness, and they possess a knowledge of the world, which places them on a level with the most civilised nations of Europe. Their Rabbis are well informed men, and are treated with the greatest respect.

The three chief Rabbis are invested with judicial power; they bear the title of Dajanim (justice of the peace), and are chosen by the community for this important office. At the time of my sojourn among them, Rabby Jacob, son of Joseph Jacob, was the first Dajanim, and was greatly respected on account of his learning, benevolence and noble character. His colleagues were Rabbi Eliahu Obadja, a rich and learned man, who, by means of caravans, carries on an important trade with Damascus, — and Rabbi Avdola, one of the richest merchants of Bagdad. These three Judges

tions 300 families! It is to be wished that our travellers would fix their attention on the increase and decrease of the Jewish population in the countries they visit. Like Teixeira, Benjamin de Tudela (p. 60, 61), also speaks of some families of Bagdad, who could boast of their ancient descent. He also speeks of a Rabbi Elieser ben Zemach, who could trace his pedigree up to the Prophet Samuel, and he and his brethren knew the melodies which were sung in the Temple before its destruction. A Rabbi Daniel, whom Benjamin knew, traced his descent from the royal house of David.

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After having regained his liberty Jehoiachim took several thousand Jews, and began with their assistance to build the above mentioned wall.[1] He furnished it with towers as if it were a fortress, the largest of which was surrounded by a gallery, and served as foundation to a building resembling a Mosque. A high winding staircase in the interiour leads to the top of this tower, from which one can distinctly see with the naked eye the Babylonian tower, rising like a giant in the distance. This tower has a peculiar contrivance, which leads the inhabitants of the country to believe something wonderful and super-natural. Through this tower goes a wooden beam or pole, both ends of which run into the gallery: if this beam is violently pulled, a shaking movement is felt in the whole upper part of the tower. According to the belief of the inhabitans, the following words must be spoken as a magic spell: „Beschem Malka Schalum wa Atharato" (in the name of King Salomon and of his crown): if this is forgotten to be said, the most disastrous consequences may ensue. It was in vain I endeavoured to explain to my brethren the natural cause of this supposed wonder, which most likely consists in a hidden spring, or some other concealed piece of mechanism; but I was not able to shake their superstitious belief.

On this spot is the tomb of the Prophet Ezekiel,[2] upon which a large stone sarcophagus is erected, which, like the rest of the building, is whitened over with chalk. At the

[1] Seder Hadaroth.

[2] Kayserling, P. Teixeira: About half a day's journey from the town Teixeira perceived a large building with a high tower. This contains the tomb and the remains of the holy Prophet Ezekiel, who is called by the Moors and Jews Ezkehl — I'cheskhel — and held by all in the greatest respect.*)

*) *Teix. 102: una casa grande con una alta torre, adó esta la sepultura y cuerpo del santo Propheta Ezechiel, à quien Moros y Judios llamen Ezkhel, tenida de todos en suma veneracion, tanto por su vida y santidad, como por los milagros que affirman obra Dios alli por su sierno.* Besides Benjamin de Tudela (66 ff.) this tomb according to Asher (1. c. II. 141), is also decribed by Petachia, Charisi and Niebuhr.

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dependent on the favour of the Pacha, he could purchase by a sum of money indulgence for all his actions, and act according to his own caprice and advantage, towards all whom he wished to injure.

The religious instruction among the Jews of Bagdad is admirable; for there is a large Jeschiwa (rabbinical school), in which 60 young Rabbis study theology. This school is under the direction of the learned Rabbi Abdolah ben Abraham Seumech, who performs the duties of his office gratuitously. He is a very rich man, and, in my time, conducted one of the principal commercial houses; he has given over the management of his business to a partner, in order to devote himself exclusively to his pious office.

The Jews in Bagdad inhabit a particular quarter of the city; but they have the option of settling in other parts of the town, and many of them dwell among the Mussulmans. The community possesses nine Synagogues; of which eight are situated in the same court. At a poor-box, placed at the entrance of the court, stand several of the highest members of the community, morning and evening, to receive the alms and gifts of the passers by. These amount daily to about 1000 piastres, — and are generally used for the maintenance of the poor of the community, and for the support of the Jeschiwa. For the same purpose a tax is also levied on Kosher meat.

The ninth Synagogue is a very large building supported by sixteen columns. The Megila (book of Esther) is read there on the 14th and 15th of Adar (March). The interior of the edifice presents nothing worthy of note; the ceiling is ornamented with sculpture. This Synagogue is called Beth Haknezeth Sheik (Isaac) Gaon.[1] In a side room of it is the tomb of this learned man. It is a catafalque, the height

[1] Benjamin de Tudela p. 60 speaks of 10 Jeschiwas, and p. 63 and 64 of 28 Synagogues and of 1000 Jewish families, but of the latter Synagogue he makes no mention. — Pethachia p. 173 mentions the same number. P. 182 he speaks of three Synagogues.

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I entertain another opinion respecting this. After many enquiries I made on the spot itself, and after having consulted with the Chachamim of the country, I have arrived at the conviction that this Pentateuch was witten by Rabbi Anan, who lived in the year 4490, at the time of the great Gaonim, as is related in the work Raawet. This Rabbi possessed no rank under the Gaonim; he therefore turned to chism, and became the founder of the sect of the Karaites, who, by the Jews, are called Karahim; that is, Followers of the Word, of the dead letter of the Bible (from the Hebrew Kera, to read). He drew a great number of Israelites over to his sect. This account is found confirmed in the work of the Abbé Bargès, — Professor of Oriental Languages at the Sorbonne in Paris, — called: „*Japhet ben Zeli Bassorensis Caraïtae in librorum psalmorum commentarii Arabici.*" The learned author, who made me a present of a copy of his work, likewise explains the name *Caraïtae* „Readers or writers, the sons or mediators of Holy Writ."

This Pentateuch is only used on the Joumkipur (day of atonement); and all my entreaties to be permitted to examine the manuscript were useless, as it is only allowable to read it on the above mentioned day.

In the interior of the Synagogue is a certain room, which is always kept closed; it is never even entered by the Jews, and is certainly therefore not accessible to any one else. It is a so-called Guenisa[1] (place for the safe custody of ancient writings) in which old manuscripts are

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the tomb of the Prophet Ezekiel, but he does not mention the name of the place. He likewise says that the Jews assemble there from new year until the day of Atonement, which however now takes place at quite a different period as we shall mention. He also speaks of 60 towers and of many Synagogues. I, however, only found one tower and one Synagogue. — Petachia, p. 179, likewise speaks of this tomb of the Prophet; but does not mention the place. Like Tudela he also mentions that the Jews assemble there from new year until the day of Atonement; the Pentateuch he does not name.

[1] The Jews in the East and in Africa have still the custom of preserving in an appointed place torn and worn out books and manuscripts,

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that soon for them also a better and happier future would dawn.

In Bagdad I found the words of the Bible verified: „And thou shalt rejoice in the presence of thy Lord, thou, and thy son and thy daughter, thy man servant, and thy maid servant, and the Levite that is within thy gates."[1]

I myself was received with the greatest hospitality; and kindness, coming from the heart, rejoiceth the soul. The head of one of the richest families, Awdul Asis ben Awdul Nawi, received me into his house during my stay there. I saw with much pleasure how the poor, the widows and orphans receive before the beginning of the Sabbath the alms of the rich, and how often, besides these customary gifts, they are entertained at the tables of the wealthy. The sight of all this happiness, of this piety, and of their sacred observance of the precepts of the law, was for me a true refreshment, an oasis in the wilderness, and it animated my courage to continue my researches.

Another observation which I made in Bagdad is the following: In the town about a third more girls are born than boys; at the birth of a girl, the house is filled with sorrow; for the dowry is thought of. They likewise marry at a very early age, for instance, — some years before my visit to Bagdad, a girl of 8 or 10 years old was married to a young man of 18 or 20 years of age. Much sorrow and evil was caused by these early marriages: there was therefore a judicial determination that the daughters of the rich should not marry before their thenth year, those of the middle classes before their eleventh, and the poorer population not before their twelvth year. If a girl therefore remains unmarried until her fifteenth year, she may give up

[1] Deuteronomy c. XVI. 11. 14.

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the time of the Feast of weeks many pious pilgrims fr
Bagdad and Bassora, from Persia and from other countri
without distinction to rank or sex, come to celebrate t
festival at Kabur-Kefil. Numerous ceremonies take pl
at this time. On the eve of the festival the men go i
the Synagogue, and read there the book of the Prop
Ezekiel. An hour before daybreak the privilege of
placing the old covers by new ones as well as of readi
aloud before the tomb of the Prophet the Hafthora[1] of t
day, is sold to the highest bidder. The first of these fi
ctions can be executed by several pious persons; the res
of the sale of this privilege often exceeds the sum of 1(
piastres. When this has been arranged, they proceed
change the draperies, which takes place amid the songs
the assembled multitude; songs, the beauty and harmo
of which, added to the accuracy with which this sole
religious ceremony was executed, excited my admirati
Hymns were sung in the pauses during the ceremony. T
lasts three hours and the Hafthora lasts quite as long. D
ing the whole time the women are present in the Sy
gogue, in order to listen devoutly to the hymns, which
especially composed for this festival.

Shall I now relate some of the narratives, of whicl
was told thousands more or less fabulous, concerning
different miracles and wonderful things, which are said
have taken place at the tomb of the Prophet? The rea
will allow me to be silent on this subject; for I could
relate anything of interest to him.

The nomadic Arabs of the desert likewise come
true belief to the tomb of the Prophet, and kiss the ca
falque with veneration. They also offer gifts to the Chacham
of the place, in order to obtain by their mediation the fav
of the Prophet.

After the liberation of King Jehoiachim from captivi
he gave a great portion of the land and vineyards, wh

[1] A portion of the book of the Prophet.

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unless the bridegroom has seen the bride.[1] The marriage is then performed according to the precepts of the Talmud.

At the conclusion of the ceremony the Chachamim return with the bridegroom to his house, while the bride remains under the parental roof. In the evening the bridegroom and his companions fetch the bride, and conduct her to his dwelling. The young wife is not accompanied by her parents. They then partake of a short repast, and after that, the young couple are conducted to a chamber especially prepared. The bridegroom being contented with the modesty of his young wife, a messenger is immediately sent to the parents and the night is spent in merry revelry. Not until the third evening do the parents of the young wife with all the relations come to the house of the son-in-law. There, grand and expensive entertainments take place; and the poor are liberally remembered. The marriage solemnities last, according to patriarchal custom, seven whole days.

The town of Bagdad is divided by the Tigris into two unequal parts; of which the largest, the town itself, is enclosed by a wall, at the end of which is a fortress, used for barracks. On entering the town by the gate of Mosul, the view is really magnificent. The streets are broad; in them are numerous shops, filled with the most splendid wares, and costly bazaars, particularly those which are situated in the middle of the town.

On the other shore of the Tigris is that portion of the town at which the different caravans arrive, and from which they take their departure. It is a very large market place, where the foreign merchants and travellers join the caravans. A bridge in a very bad condition crosses the river, the inundations of which, particularly in the spring, cause much damage.

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[1] Messechet Kiduschin p. 41.

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In the town of Meshed Ali[1] is the tomb of Ali, whom I have before mentioned. He was the founder of a Mussulman sect, which is greatly diffused throughout Persia. — Over te tomb is built a large Mosque of white marble, the

[1] Kayserling, P. Teixeira: The next place he visited was Bagdad. As at this time could he not cross the Tigris, he determined to take the route through the Syrian-Arabian desert. The chief person of his cafila or caravan was, according to his description, a Jew, who had gone over to the faith of Islam: in whom the Portuguese, who came to transact business in this country, and the Venetians, placed much confidence. On the 2d September the caravan began to move. The account which Teixeira gives of his journey through the wilderness is interesting. On the second day of his journey he perceived a mountain on his right hand, called by the Arabs Gibel Sinai (mount Sinai); near to which the natives place the ancient Bassora.*) The difficulties of a journey through the wilderness were not wanting; soon came the terrible Simoom to trouble him, and then the burning thirst, wich so often tormented him in these dry and parched regions. Great was his joy at being able to quench his thirst at Reamelah, as the Arabs call this part. But of his wanderings through the wilderness we must not relate more here, lest we should overstep the space allowed us. Only this one remark we must make, — that there were Jews who journeyed with Teixeira in that caravan, who, as he said, separated themselves on Friday from the general company, because they would not travel on the Sabbath.**) After a journey of several weeks he approached the territory of Merat-Aly or Mam Aly, or Meshed- or Imam-Ali.†) On a Sabbath he entered the town, which was founded at the time of Ali. Here was consigned to the earth, after having wandered for several weeks in the wilder-

*) Petachia likewise, the traveller of Regensburg, mentions p. 78 a Mount Sinai near Bagdad, which is said to form a chain with the sacred mountain of the same name.

**) Teixeira, 94: *quedando alli los Judios, por que el dia siguiente hera Sabado y no podian caminar.*

According to the Law the Jews are permitted, on account of the dangers to which they are exposed, to travel with a caravan on the Sabbath day. I was told of a traveller, who, through the strictness of his religious observances, left the caravan on a Friday, and furnished with a wallet and mat went into a little wood to celebrate his Sabbath: — it was his last. All enquiries respecting the non-appearance of the Jew were in vain; he was never heard of again. — I believe that these travellers were Karaites, who take the Bible literally. (Exodus XVI. 29.)

†) *Ibid. 99: Mexat Aly o Mam Aly que todo es uno, y quiere dezir Mesquita o casa de oracion de Aly.*

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these remedies must however be employed immediately after the infliction of the sting; for the effects of the poison are rapid and fearful.

The terraces are planted and ornamented with flowers, and when the heat prevents sleep, persons meet together, and spend the time in friendly conversation. The apartments of the rich are splendidly decorated, and kept almost in the European style.

The population of Bagdad consists of four different elements. In the first rank are the Arabians, Jews and Christians; after them follow the Persians and Indians. — Two consuls reside in the town, one French, the other English. Arabic, Turkish, Persian, and Italian are spoken.

The men dress in the Turkish style, with a splendour, which is only known in the East. They wear yellow shoes, with turned-up toes. The dress of the women resembles the négligé of Europeans; for a headdress they wear a little red fez (a sort of cap), with long gold- or silk-tassels ornamented with pearls and diamonds. When they go out, they wear a silk haik, a kind of apron, reaching to the neck; and a long veil protects them from the rays of the sun. In general the women possess great beauty, and their cleverness and activity in needle work are astonishing.

The importance and extent of the commerce of the town are universally known; enormous caravans, some more than 2000 camels strong, come and go daily in ceaseless change from, and to all parts. I was told that twice a year a caravan of more than 6000 camels went to Damascus. The trade with India is completely in the hands of the Jews, who possess manufacturies in Calcutta, Bombay, Singapore, and even at Canton. The most important articles of trade in these countries are indigo, spices, silk stuffs, some kinds of rare fruits and dyes, which come from different provinces of China. From Persia come chiefly carpets, shawls, silk, tombako (a kind of tobacco), wines, almonds &c. From the same country are also obtained precious stones, rubies, eme-

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CHAPTER XVII.

From Bagdad to Bassora. The desert El Ozeir (called by the Arabs Deser Asar).

Voyage on the Tigris. — The bird Debi-Kousch. — The tomb of Ezra in the desert El Ozeir. — Koath. — Suk-e-Shejuck. — Gumruk. — Gorna. — Bassora. — Mohamma. — Abeshur.

I had the choice of two routes; the one by land through the desert, the other down the Tigris. The way through the desert was too dangerous on account of the many hordes of robbers, so I decided on going by the Tigris, thus choosing the longer, but the safer and more convenient journey; though even in this case there are Arabs often lurking on the shores, who board the vessels, and plunder them of everything. I embarked in one of the sailing boats which cross the river. — On my way I was told of an enormous bird, bearing the name of Debi-Kousch, which follows the caravans, and feeds on its favorite food, camels dung, from which it receives its name. Later I myself saw this bird: it appeared to me to be a stork, although it looked larger than the specimens I had seen in Africa. It cannot fly, as it has only short wings; but is able with one flap of them to kill a man. When caught young, it is capable of being tamed.

About an hour's journey in the desert, we discovered a large square tower, terminating in a point. Four gates lead into it, and at its corners are large blocks of stone, about 24 feet in height, and 18 in breadth. The building is remarkable on account of its beautiful sculpture; and ac-

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said: „The Bible speaks of a veiled woman; but Judah, the son of Jacob, took her for a harlot.“ [1] — The word was hard, although taken from the Bible, with which my companions were well acquainted; otherwise I had gone too far in saying this: for what matters it if the women cover their faces, and their form be displayed. The reader will kindly excuse my biblical remark with the same indulgence as my listeners did. I will also mention what was related to me on this occasion; namely, that a woman, who only wore one most necessary article of clothing, was cleaning a court-yard when, at the sight of a stranger who entered the door, she threw this, her only garment, over her head, in order to cover her face. — In such conversations it is always better to rest one's arguments on the Bible, for there is no gainsaying that authority; although unfortunately it is not always rightly understood.

An hour's journey from Bagdad is a small building, shaded by eight gigantic date-trees; it is divided into two parts, in one of them is the richly decorated tomb of the High-Priest Joshua,[2] mentioned by Zechariah.[3] Several old manuscripts are under the catafalque, portions of which are

[1] Genesis c. XXXVIII. 15.

[2] Kayserling, P. Teixeira: A short distance from Bagdad Teixeira found in a little hut a tomb, for which Moors and Jews testify great respect. They say that the body of a Jewish High-Priest rests there. It is a large tomb built of stone and chalk. At the top of the catafalque is a metal plate, on which is written in hebrew characters: Jesuah Kohen Gadol. The inhabitants of the neighbourhood maintain that he was a holy man, and all venerate him on account of the miracles, which, as they assert, God performed through him.*)

[3] Zechariah c. III. 1.

*) *Teixeira 124: Fuera de aquella parte de la ciudad esta recogida en una pequenna casa una sepultura tenida de Moros y Judios en grande veneracion, en la qual dizen está depositado el cuerpo de un summo sacerdote Hebreo. El tumulo es como una grande caxa de piedra y cal, y en la cabecera tiene una camina de cobre, con unas letras de relieuo en Hebrayco que dizen-Jehsuah Kohen Gado (1) que se Josuah summo sacerdato dizen que fue varon santo, y todos to reuerencian como tal, por milagros que affirman ha Dios hecho por el.*

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salem, and that he died near Babylon. The Bible likewise mentions one part of this assertion.[1] The place of burial is not distinctly named by the Seder Hadoroth; I therefore keep to tradition, as, after a most accurate research, I could not find anything more correct.[2] The anniversary of the death of Ezra is fixed on the 9th of January in the Selichot of the Portuguese Jews: the Seder Olam says that he died in the beginning of the year 3500, according to Bible-reckoning.

Many Jews from Bagdad and Bassora celebrate the Feast of weeks at the tomb of Ezra, and take part in the pious ceremonies. The Arabs know the purpose of these pilgrimages, and place no hindrance in their way.

Koath. Suk-e-Shejuck. Gumruk. Gorna.

After a further voyage of two days I arrived at Koath (Kut-el-Amara). Twelve hours' journey from this place is the small market-town Suk-e-Shejuck (called by the Arabs Sukasuk); it is reached from Koath by the canal Sheh-Sah, which unites the Euphrates with the Tigris. About forty Jewish families live here, who occupy themselves in trade; their situation is tolerable. A branch of the Tigris divides itself here into several small streams, and but a few hours' journey further on is a branch of the Euphrates. The Arabs use these small streams for irrigation by conducting them by trenches into their fields, in which occupation I have often seen them engaged. The Tigris here is so rapid that it carries away whole blocks of rock with it, and in its

[1] Ezra c. VII. 11.

[2] Benjamin of Tudela, p. 73, speaks of the tomb of Ezra. He says it lies on the river Samura on the Persian boundary, and many Mahomedans dwelt there as well as 1500 Jews, who possessed four Synagogues. I found it in the desert. — Petachia, p. 192, places it on the boundary of Babylon.

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dwelt, which number is now reduced to 50.[1] A devastating epidemic decimated the population, so that a whole portion of the city is empty, and the houses fallen into ruins. In the middle of these ruins stand four Synagogues, of which however three are unused and empty; for *one* now suffices for the little community. The Jews possess full liberty; they are all wealthy, and many of them carry on very extensive commercial transactions; they are moreover hospitable and benevolent, but their education is much neglected. Be-

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Bassora. The town is particularly celebrated for its dates, which as Teixeira remarks, form the chief means of support to the inhabitants of this part, and are so fine and good that annually a large quantity of this fruit is sent to Bagdad and to Persian cities. Teixeira found the town in a deplorable condition: eight or ten days before his arrival, a powder-explosion had destroyed a portion of it and done considerable damage.*) It is surprising that he does not mention the Jews of this city, who in the time of Benjamin of Tudela, amounted to 2000.**) If however we consider that the 3000 Jewish families, who only 20 years since dwelt there, have now decreased to 50, it is quite possible that their number at the beginning of the 17th century was in like manner too inconsiderable for Teixeira to have anything to relate concerning them.

Near to this town he perceived a small house, in which native Moors performed their devotions. On his enquiry he ascertained that it was dedicated to Içá ben Mariam (Jesus, the son of Mary.†) At the same time those of whom he enquired told him that they reverenced the founder of the Christian religion as Ruyalah (spirit of God), „espiracion de Dios," as Teixeira adds in explanation.††) Without doubt these were remains of Christian communities, which had formed themselves at the time of the foundation of Christianity.

1 Benjamin de Tudela, p. 73, speaks of it, and says that at his time 2000 Jews lived there. — *Ritter's Erdkunde*, Vol. 11, p. 1037, specifies 100 Jewish families according to Niebuhr. Now the number is decreased to the above statement.

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*) Teixeira 77: *ocho o diez dias antes de mi llegada hauia tomado fuego una casa de municiones y hauiendo tocado en la poluora, ardieron cinco mil y tantos odres . . .*

**) Benjamin of Tudela (ed. Asher) 73.

†) Teixeira 78: *pergunteles que casa era aquella, respondieron me, que era dedicada a Içá ben Mariam . . .*

††) Ibid.: *los Moros lo veneran mucho llamandole Ruyalah, que es espiracion de Dios. (Ruy* the Hebrew *Ruach.)*

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place where is said to have stood the furnace, into which Nebuchadnezzar caused the Prophets Ananias, Misael and Azarias to be cast. The former site of the palace of this king is also shown, as well as the supposed dwelling of Daniel. In the interior of the so-called Daniel's cave bubbles now a spring, which is held in great veneration by the Arabs and Jews; as its miraculous water is said to cure fevers. An ancient lime-tree is also here, which is particularly venerated by the inhabitants; as, according to tradition, it was worshipped by Nebuchadnezzar. Formerly this tree divided itself into three branches, one of which, so I was told, an English lord had cut off; a desecration which caused a complete rebellion among the Arab population, and for which this nobleman as well as the English consul had to pay dearly.

Six hours' journey southwest of the ruins of Babylon rises a gigantic mass of ruins; it is the world-renowned work of presumptuous men, the well-known Tower of Babel, described in the Bible.[1] I should have liked much to view the ruins of this enormous building, but I did not possess the necessary means for hiring a strong escort, without which it is impossible to venture there, as these ruins are infested by hordes of robbers, and wild animals.

The people say that it takes three days to inspect the remains of the Babylonian Tower, among which are still to be found rooms in good preservation, and sepulchres. According to the accounts of the Jews and Arabs, these ruins are 1450 feet broad, and of such an enormous extent that, taking their highest point as a centre, they lie round in a circumference of twenty hours' journey. Several flights of steps lead to the summit.

About three days' journey from Bagdad on the right shore of the Euphrates, stands the town of Hillah.[2] About

[1] Petachia p. 191 likewise speaks of this tower.

[2] Kayserling, P. Teixeira: Not far from Mexat-Ocem Teixeira passed over the Euphrates, entered Mesopotamia, and visited many of those ancient places of historical interest to his brethren in the faith. —

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is free from this illness. The symptoms of this disease consist first of little blue ulcers upon the skin, which later become grey, then swell up, extend over the whole skin, and even attack the flesh. After recovery this illness leaves behind visible marks and scars. The Jews call this disease — which likewise appears in winter, though in a milder form — by its biblical name. Those who are attacked by the white leprosy never recover, as is mentioned in the Bible.

Near to Bassora are four large buildings fallen into ruins, said by the people of the country to have been the stalls of King Salomon, which, however, is most improbable.

From Bassora I proceeded by the Shat-el-Arab towards Mohammerah, situated at a distance of three days' journey on foot. With a favourable wind the passage by ship lasts three hours. This town belongs to the Persian dominion; there are no Jewish inhabitants. Hence I continued my journey by the Chor Bahmeshir, called by the Arabs Shat Mohammerah,[1] and arrived at the village Koi, which is at two days' journey distance on foot, and forms the extreme southern boundary of Asiatic Turkey. Hence I proceeded by the canal Shat-el-Arab to Mohamma, where the river flows by several mouths into the Persian Gulf.

From Mohamma, Abeshur, called by the Persians Bender Abeschur, may be reached in 24 hours.

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[1] Benjamin of Tudela, p. 73, speaks of a river Samura; it is possible that this is the Shat Mohammerah.

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CHAPTER XVI.

Kabur-Kefil.

Tomb of the Prophet Ezekiel. — Pilgrimages to the tomb. — Bequest of King Jehoiachim. — Tombs of the Kings Sitkejahu and Jehoiachim. — Sifkif. — Meshed Ali.

The town of Kabur-Kefil lies near the Euphrates, several hours' journey from the ruins of Babylon. Kefil means in Turkish and in Arabic „surety", and this name of the town is derived from the memorable circumstance of the Prophet Ezekiel's standing forth here as surety for the innocence of the Jews, at the moment when, in consequence of calumnies, a persecution broke out against them. Even at the present time, the Arabs dwelling there treat our people with great consideration.

The town presents the appearance of an irregular mass of walls, and is now exclusively occupied by the Arabs, and by one of their tribes, that of Hindu.

In the town is a building enclosed by a wall, containing the tomb of the Prophet Ezekiel, which is covered with costly tapestry, and different kinds of rich needle work and embroidery. According to the calculation of Seder Hadoroth the Prophet died during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, who had taken prisoner Jehoiachim, King of Judah. The tomb lay between the rivers Euphrates and Kaebar, and had at that time no wall to enclose it. After the death of Nebuchadnezzar, his son Evil-Merodach succeeded. He not only liberated his royal prisoner, but presented him with land and vineyards in the vicinity.[1]

[1] Jeremiah c. LII. 31.

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Halah Habor, to the cities of the Medes and to the shores of the river Gozen (Ganges). (II. Kings XVII. 6.)

The kingdom of Israel was released after that by means of three events following each other; and the different divisions of the captive children of Israel were conducted to different places, the names of which were not always mentioned. The Bible gives however different intimations concerning them. Thus, for instance, in Isaiah XI. 11: „And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set His hand again a second time to recover the remnant of His people, which shall be left, from *Assyria*, and from *Egypt*, and from *Pathros*, and from *Cush*, and from *Elam*, and from *Shinar*, and from *Hamath*, and from the islands of the sea." — And further on it is written: „Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring My sons from far, and My daughters from the ends of the earth."[1] — And finally: „Behold, these shall come from far: and lo, these from the north and from the west; and these from the land of Sinim."[2]

Egypt and *Assyria* are sufficiently known. With respect to *Cush*, it is generally believed that by that name Ethiopia and Abyssinia are meant; for Jeremiah says: „Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?"[3] which has distinct reference to the colour of the skin. — Elam is Persia; as is evident from the Prophet Daniel, when he says: „Shushan in the Province of Elam;"[4] and I believe that this one proof is sufficient. By an edict of King Cyrus the scattered tribes in this latter country were permitted to return to their own land; this refers particularly to the tribes of Judah and Benjamin who with some Priests, Levites, and different members of the family of Aaron, alone

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[1] Isaiah c. XLIII. 5. 6.
[2] Isaiah c. XLIX. 12.
[3] Jeremiah c. XIII. 23.
[4] Daniel c. VIII. 2.

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side of it stands a large Synagogue, the outside of which is covered with a beautiful varnish, similar to the colour of tortoise shell. In the interior, the side towards Jerusalem is quite bare and unfinished, as a sign of mourning for the Holy Temple in the city of the Almighty, and in remembrance of the fragments of its walls. The tomb of the Prophet is entered by a door in the Sanctuary.

On one of the walls of the building two figures of the size of life are to be seen: they were painted in days of old, and are almost obliterated by age. According to the assertion of the Jews they are the pictures of the Prophet Ezekiel and King Jehoiachim. From the dim and faded outlines of these pictures any resemblance to the human form is with difficulty to be traced; the colours and the fashion of the apparel are no longer to be seen. The whole wall at the entrance-door is covered at different places with groups of figures, something like the inscriptions and decorations of the ancient Egyptians; they are in remembrance of those who built this edifice, — that is, of a whole people, who, with their king, erected it.

According to the assertion of the people of the country, this is said to be the only Synagogue built by command of a King of Judah, and at the erection of which he personally assisted. The sacred and other writings do not always notice this: later I shall mention several other Synagogues which are to be found, in or near this province, at the tombs of the Kings of Judah; but it was impossible for me to obtain any certain proofs that these edifices were erected by command of these kings.

In the holy shrine of this Synagogue are preserved different manuscripts of the law; among which was one of the most extraordinary size I had ever seen. It is written on a kind of parchment which is called Guewil, and, according to the belief of the people of the country, was penned by the hand of Ezekiel himself.[1]

[1] Benjamin de Tudela p. 66, 67 also speaks of this Pentateuch and of

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the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, who are in certain countries of Europe, which, according to geographical calculation, lie to the west or north-west of Palestine.

The address to the south: Place no hindrances! has reference to Ethiopia, Abyssinia, and Nubia.

CHAPTER XIX.

The East Indies, from time immemorial, have been inhabited by many different tribes. I have devoted my attention especially to the six chief tribes, and have endeavoured to become acquainted with their habits and religious customs; of which I will here give a succint account. — As in the whole of my work I have occupied myself foremost with my brethren in the faith, I shall therefore mention them first.

I shall speak of the following tribes:

1) The Bene-Israel, or the white Jews.
2) The Canarinz.[1]
3) The black Jews of Cochin.
4) The Banians.
5) The Parsees.
6) The Hindoos.

[1] Derivation from Cranganor.

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preserved, which are said to date from ancient times, and to have come from different places. This place for the preservation of old relics is held in great veneration by the followers of every creed.[1]

Beside the Synagogue and the tomb of the Prophet, a Jeschîba is erected, in which the Chachamim, sometimes 20 in number, continually assemble for pious reading and for the study of the Talmud and other books of the law: They are the only Jews who have a settled dwelling place in Kabur-Kefil. Their rich brethren in Bagdad supply them with everything necessary for the support of themselves, and of this institution, which is maintained by large gifts and legacies. For instance, a few years before I was there, a rich Jewish merchant in Bagdad, named Jacob Zemach, died without any male heirs, and left the whole of his property in charitable bequests to his brethren in the faith at Zephat, Palestine and likewise 150,000 karans (1 karan = 5 piastres) for the support of the Jeschiba at Kabur-Kefil. These pious hermits, so devoted to learning, in whose family the name of Servant of the Prophet is hereditary, are freed from all taxes, and served by three Arabs.

The Jews, as well as the Arabs of the vicinity, cherish a very firm belief in the efficacy of certain acts for the protection of which they call on the tomb of the Prophet Ezekiel, especially with regard to sick people, who are not considered quite incurable. — But who knows the will of the Almighty? — This question no one could answer.

Every Friday afternoon the above mentioned Chachamim go to the tomb of the Prophet, sing hymns there and pious songs, and change the tapestry with which the catafalque is covered. The Jews of the surrounding provinces likewise make pilgrimages to this place. Every year at

and Pentateuchs which have become illegible, and of burying them every two or three years in the cemetery. A stone is placed over them with the inscription „Guenisa"; and a festival takes place at the time.

1 Benjamin de Tudela p. 67 speaks of this Guenisa.

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1) The river Gozen, mentioned in the Bible, is according to the assertion of the Bene-Israel, no other than the Ganges which flows through India, on the shores of which this tribe dwells in great numbers. The Indian word „Ganges" contains all the letters of the Hebrew word „Gosen" (Gozan).

2) It is known the Ganges has its rise in Upper Thibet, a country bordering on the kingdom of Cabul. From the side whence the children of Israel came to India the way through the desert is so dangerous and difficult, that only large caravans at long intervals venture upon it, and up to this day only most imperfect and doubtful accounts are possessed respecting the people, who inhabit these wild and unknown regions. The Jews, who wandered through the desert, have, as it were, left a trace of their passage behind them; for several brethren remained there, whose descendants have been preserved up to the present day.

3) The Bene-Israel have no Cohanim out of the priestly tribe of Aaron, and no Levites. It is well known that the Jews of the German and Portuguese rites, who spring from the kingdom of Judah, have, up to the present time, Cohanim and Levites and pay them extreme respect; and that even in the Temple, they enjoy some privileges, in remembrance of the ancient privileges of this priestly race. It is also known that the whole tribe of Levi, who performed the office of priest, was most closely connected with the fate of the royal house of Judah, and did not mix with the rebellious tribes of the kingdom of Israel.

4) The Bene-Israel dwelling in India formerly possessed a chronicle, which was written up to the time of their arrival in this country. Unfortunately during the many wars, which they had with Europeans, respecting their occupation of the country, this chronicle was lost; the Bene-Israel being obliged constantly to flee from one province to another. The Bene-Israel of Cochin on the coast of Malabar possess however a similar document, and have preserved it among all the storms of ages. In this chronicle is written the history of the tribe from the period of its banishment, in

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he owed to the generosity of the King of Babylon, for the support of these buildings. The institution stands to this day; and even Ali, a relation of Mahomed, venerated by the Persians as a Prophet, when he came to these countries to obtain followers for the new religion, allowed it to remain in its integrity.

On my return to these countries at the end of the year 1850, I heard that the Arabs of the tribe of Hindu, in conjunction with other Arabs had refused to pay tribute to the Pacha of Bagdad. The Pacha sent troops in order to enforce it; but on account of their small number they were repulsed with loss by the rebels and withdrew into the town of the Prophet Ezekiel. The Arabs did not dare venture to follow them there, or to shoot upon them, for fear of desecrating the sanctuary. The little band thus gained time to wait for further help from Bagdad, on the arrival of which the rebels were routed on all sides, and compelled to submit and to pay the required tribute. During these events I was at Bagdad. — Veneration for the Prophet works so powerfully on the minds of the uncivilised people of these parts, who consist of the most powerful and courageous warriors of the numerous hordes of robbers, that the Chachamim of Kabur-Kefil never have to fear the least invasion on their part, and they are even protected by them against other robbers.

The tombs of King Sitkejahu, of the Prophet Zephaniah, and of several members of David's family, which are in the vicinity of Kabur-Kefil, — as well as Siftif, with its ancient Synagogue, — are mentioned by Benjamin of Tudela p. 68, 69; to which I refer. But the Jews, which he found at these places in his time in such numbers, are now no more to be found; a few only are scattered here and there.

Meshed Ali. — Kelbella.

From Kabur-Kefil I went to Meshed Ali, a distance of about six hours' journey.

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all matters of religion, and had completely forgotten the Hebrew language, even so far as the elementary knowledge of the letters, although, as before remarked, they devoutly preserve several Pentateuchs in their Synagogues. Their divine service was confined to several external performances, which had been disfigured by length of time; but their veneration for the Mosaic law was deeply rooted in them, and to this day they ornament their manuscripts of the law with great splendor, approach them full of reverence, and kiss them fervently, after which they slowly retire in silent prayer. They had no Hebrew prayers, and with the exception of the *one* verse „Schema Israel", all their prayers were in the language of their country: they entertained nevertheless a firm belief in the coming of the Messiah.

Some Jews of Arabic origin from Bagdad and Bassora, forming a community of about 50 families, have, within the last seven or eight years, sent teachers and slaughterers among these scattered tribes, in order to spread some knowledge and the precepts of Judaism among them. Although the Jews of Bombay are favourably disposed towards the Bene-Israel, they still do not consider them as real brethren in the faith, and avoid intermarriage with them, unjustly placing this tribe on a level with the Canarinz and other heathens. But the Bene-Israel eagerly lay claim to the name of Jew, and strive more and more to ally themselves with those of the orthodox faith.

Some Christian missionaries sometimes visit this tribe, but their endeavours to obtain proselites have until now been unsuccessful.

I estimate the number of the Bene-Israel in this colony, and in other places I have visited, at about 2000 families.[1]

In the town of Bombay live about 50 Jewish families from Bagdad, who have a Synagogue, but no Chacham only a Chochet. The richest of our brethren in the faith at Bombay are David Season, Moses Esra and Isaac David.

[1] *Ritter's Erdkunde*, Vol. 6, p. 1087, speaks of 800 Jews.

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cupola of which is of silver gilt, with a massive gold spire. Around the Mosque is arranged a cemetery, in which the richest Mussulmans of Persia, within a distance of 30 days' journey, are buried; in order that they may rest in a spot made sacred by the tomb of their Prophet. The embalmed bodies are transported on mules in solidly closed coffins: and for every such body, brought past Bagdad, a tuman (persian gold coin of 55 piastres) must be paid. The souls of the dead, they believe, are conducted by their Prophet direct to heaven.

Near Meshed Ali is the town of Kelbella, in which only Persians reside. The inhabitants formerly paid no taxes, because the soil was considered sacred, and even entrance into the town was denied to Jews and Christians. About nine years ago the Nasi Pacha of Bagdad insisted on the payment of tribute; they resisted, but were conquered and fled into the Mosque of Ali, where they thought to find shelter, but the Pacha had the Mosque fired upon: and upon this the rebels surrendered. The half-destroyed building was however afterwards rebuilt. The town now has a better population, and is open alike to Jews and Christians.

After having visited these places I returned to Bagdad, and in October 1848 embarked for Bassora.

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ness tied to the back of a camel, the body of the founder of the celebrated Mahomedan sect, which after him bears the name of the Aliites. The tomb is held sacred by the Arabs and a splendid Mosque is erected over it. The structure of this temple, which, when Teixeira saw it, possessed no longer its former interior splendour, gives evidence of the high artistic taste of those who erected it; as the interior itself reminds one of the well-known magnificence of the Eastern people. The portuguese traveller was not a little astonished at the three large golden lamps in the temple, which were decorated with precious stones, and had been presented by the different princes.*) The inhabitants of Meshed-Ali suffer neither Jews nor Christians among them; in fact no one who does not belong to their sect; for they bear a mortal hatred to all.**)

*) Teixeira, 199 ff.

**) *Ibid. 101: no assienta en esta pueblo Judio ni Christiano alguno, porque ellos tienen a todos odio mortal.*

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be concluded that the Canarinz originally belonged to these tribes, as, notwithstanding the difference of their worship, they believe only in one God as the Highest Being, and only marry among themselves; probably they have been compelled by circumstances to forsake the belief of their fathers, to which however in some customs they have always remained faithful. This assertion is the more easy of credit as, in other countries in Europe, particularly in Spain and Russia, similar facts were to be met with: thus in Russia, at the beginning of the present century, thousands of Jews, known under the name of Shobatnik (observers of the Sabbath), who had been compelled to apostatize for several centuries, of their own free will again embraced Judaism, the faith of their fathers. I have compiled a collection of historical facts relative to the Shobatnik, and published them in the year 1855 at Tlemsan in Algeria, under the title: „Four years war of the Poles against the Russians and Tartars (1648 to 1652)," to which p. 64 — 69 I here refer.[1] The Shobatnik, like the Canarinz, had completely forgotten their origin; they celebrated mechanically the traditional festivals of the Jews, and it only needed an accidental circumstance to induce their return to Mosaism.

[1] A portion of the preface of this little work and the conclusion p. 61 — 63 were not written by me, but added by the French translator.

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cording to the assertion of the inhabitants of the country, it is said to have been built in the time of the first Babylonian kings.

Three days' journey down the Tigris, in the middle of the desolate and barren desert El Ozeir, rises, on the shore of the river, a large square building, in which is the tomb of Ezra. The building is surrounded by some smaller houses, and contains two spacious rooms leading one into the other, of which the first belongs to the Mussulmans, and the second together with the tomb, to the Jews. A dim half-darkness reigns in the apartment, into which a faint light from without is admitted through the door. There is a catafalque here, 16 feet long, 10 high, and 6 broad. Inscriptions, now illegible, cover all the four sides of this catafalque, over which are spread costly tapestries embroidered with gold; and many rich decorations ornament the room. Although in the midst of the desert, and surrounded by tribes of Arab robbers, still there is nothing to fear for the safety of these treasures; as, from the veneration which the Arabs pay to the tomb of Ezra, they are safe from being plundered, and, according to tradition, no robber would be able to leave that sanctuary, without having first restored to its place that which he had taken.

The ships cast anchor not far from this tomb and all travellers, without distinction of faith, betake themselves to it, in order to pray. The stranger, who has spent some days in the desert, cannot divest himself of a deep religious impression when, in the middle of the wilderness, he perceives this memorable tomb.

The tomb of Ezra was for me an object of repeated investigation; for as the Bible neither mentions his death nor the place of his burial, I entertained some doubts as to the identity of the tomb. From the Seder Hadoroth, and other historical works, I have however perfectly satisfied myself of the fact. They relate that Ezra went to King Artasatha (from whom he received letters), in order to beg for some privileges for his brethren dwelling in Jeru-

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they had adopted the Jewish faith, they afterwards married. — This account given by the native black Jews of their descent is rendered credible by two important facts; first, that the black Jews only dwell in those parts of the country occupied by Europeans; and secondly, that their religious customs are the same as those of the Jews of the eastern rites — from whom it may therefore be inferred with certainty that they are descended. In favour of this opinion, and against the asserted descent from the slaves, can be likewise added, that their features, and their hair bear the type of pure oriental origin.

Dr. Buchanan, in the account of his travels, relates that this Jewish population possess Hebrew manuscripts and Pentateuchs on parchment, which formerly belonged to the Jewish fugitives, who, according to the Mikwe Israel, were murdered and plundered by their slaves. I myself have seen these documents, but found in them nothing particularly remarkable or interesting, either in respect to their antiquity or their contents.

The black Jews bear the curse of prejudice on account of their colour. Just as most of the Jews of Bagdad avoid any connection with the Bene-Israel, so do the white Jews reject all connection with their black brethren.[1] I have remarked in general that the other Jews have more sympathy for their black fellow believers than have the Bene-Israel; for they take interest in their poor, and often have large commercial transactions with them. — The black Jews of Cochin rejoice in every recognition of their being brethren in the faith, and are likewise very hospitable to strangers of their persuasion.

The black Jews have their communities, their Chachamim and schools; they live apart from the others, and occupy themselves with trade, in which many of them have obtained

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[1] *Ritter's Erdkunde*, Vol. 5, book 2, Asia, p. 599. The white Jews likewise look down upon the black ones, as upon an inferior and unclean caste.

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headlong course overflows the shore. In vain do the inhabitants build dams to control the flood, and keep it in bounds. The course of the river is very changeable, and navigation is rendered difficult by its many windings. The vicinity is inhabited by numerous warlike tribes of Arabs, who are almost entirely independent, although the Sheik of the country acknowledges the rule of the Pacha of Bagdad by sending him occasional presents.

Five hours' journey from this place is the village *Gumruk* on the shore of the Euphrates. The Turkish word „Gumruk" signifies „tax", and here tax is demanded. From this place the Euphrates becomes very broad; its shores are planted with trees, and of palms in particular there are considerable woods.

Gorna lies on a sort of peninsular between the Euphrates and the Tigris, and is surrounded by fruitful trees and fields. Numerous herds graze here, and buffaloes are very numerous, the milk of their cows is so rich, that in an hour it becomes as firm as butter, of which fact I convinced myself. The Sheik demands a toll from the ships coming from Bagdad. Not far from Gorna the Euphrates and the Tigris unite into one stream, which then bears the name of Shat-el-Arab (river of the Arabs). The shores abound in woods, and navigation becomes safer, as the desert, the territory of the bandit Arab tribes, ends here. From the place where the two streams flow together, their waters are broad, and calm as a lake.

Bassora.

The town[1] is an important place of commerce, where, only about twenty years since, nearly 3000 Jewish families

[1] Kayserling, P. Teixeira: After a voyage on the Tigris from India, I arrived, on the 14th April 1604, at the ancient and strong city of

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(which belongs to the Hindoos) is one day's journey; and for this distance I used horses. After four days' travelling in a bullock waggon I reached the city of Allahabad, and went on in the same manner to Cawnpore, which occupied seven days. From Cawnpore to Delhi (eight days' journey), and to Amritsir (one day's journey) I again used horses. In Amritsir I joined a caravan going to Lahore on the Ravi and arrived there at the end of eleven days; here ends the English territory. With another caravan I proceeded to Peshauir in Cabul, towards the borders of Afghanistan, and after I had crossed the Khyber Pass, arrived in seventeen days at Cabul. The whole journey from Bombay to Cabul had lasted nearly one hundred days.

In several places during this long journey I had met with some scattered Jews, but being unable to tarry on my way, I could not collect any particular information concerning them. Respecting the heathen tribes, their customs, and worship, I give the reader some of my observations, extracts from my work published in Algeria in the year 1854: *„Un an de séjour aux Indes orientales,"* written in French, and *„Nesiath Israel,"* written in Arabic, and printed in Hebrew letters.

4. The Banians.

The Banians are divided into several sects; some of which worship fire, some water, and others have the cow for their Deity. The customs of the fire- and water-worshippers are similar to those of the Parsees, of which I shall speak later. I therefore mention here only the last sect, — the cow-worshippers.

The sacred cow is to be known by several marks, and is venerated from her birth on account of her high destiny. She is never used for labour or service, and is always fed

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sides their commercial transactions they possess large plantations of date trees, the produce of which forms a considerable trade. I was assured there were 70 sorts of dates; but I only know 12 of them.

The Jews of Bassora, whose Nassi Rabbi Eliahu wished to have my opinion of a case concerning a Chalitza [1] have peculiar customs at the burial of their dead. The body is borne in an open coffin on a bier hung with black, and, amid chanting of funeral songs, the procession passes to the place of burial. They stop seven times on their way; and at each halt the funeral procession walks round the coffin with prayers and singing, and each person throws a piece of money into an urn placed upon the corpse. At the seventh halt the Chacham lifts up the urn, and says: „We know that no one in the world is free from the sin Sera Lebathalah,[2] which produces legions of dark thoughts, which come after death and torment the man, under the pretext that they are his children, and ought to have part in his inheritance. We therefore give to thee this money, in order that thou mayest let his body and his soul rest in peace. In the name of the Eternal and of His Holy Thora, and with the consent of the members of the congregation here present, we lay upon thee the Anathema, which shall compel thee to flee into wild and solitary regions, where thou canst no more follow any one.“ On arriving at the burial place they go round the grave, and after having placed the body in it they return to the town.

The Stadtholder of the Pacha of Bagdad, a very polite and friendly man, desired to see me, and received my visit very affably.

The inhabitants of Bassora suffer from the scourge of leprosy,[3] which rages particularly at the time of the ripening of the dates in the month of August, when scarcely any one

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1 Deuteronomy c. XXV. 9.

2 According to a cabbalistic acceptation.

3 Leviticus c. XIII. 9.

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are buried, not burned, when they die: a peculiar exception, for which I could ascertain no reason.

By the English occupants of the country, these customs are forbidden; but the Banians employ all their cunning and art in order to escape the vigilance of the authorities, and to persist in their traditional customs. I myself was a witness of one of these burial ceremonies: when the fire touched the stomach of the dead body, it burst with a loud noise, like the explosion of a gun.

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5. The Parsees.

A great part of this tribe belongs, as already said, to the fire- and water-worshippers; many however worship heavenly bodies, the sun, the moon, and the stars as Deities. Their daily worship consists in their assembling every evening, according to the sect to which they belong, at an appointed place in the open air, and praying. The worshippers of the sun place then their hands on their heads and gaze on their source of light; the moon- and star-adorers stand after sunset in the same solemn way, — their eyes turned towards their Deity. The water-worshippers go, according to the position of their residence, either to the sea or to a river; and, up to their knees in water, perform their devotions.

Each of these sects wears, as an outward sign of the worship, to which it belongs, a particular mark which has some reference to it. We have already said that the Banians, as cow-worshippers knot their turban in front in the shape of a horn: in the same way these sects wear badges. The sun-worshippers make a peak of their turban, which is made to fall over the right ear; the moon-worshippers have it over the left ear. The worshippers of the sun wear a cylinder-formed covering for the head, similar to our hats, without any ribbon, and in front it has a small shade, as a protection to the face. The stuff of which it is made differs

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CHAPTER XVIII.

East Indies.

The ten tribes, their wanderings and dispersion. — Quotations and proofs.

From Abeshur I went by steam-boat to Bombay, where I arrived at the beginning of February 1849, after a voyage of 20 days. I pass over the details of my journey and of my visit to the principal towns of Hindostan — in which I spent a year — and shall occupy myself here only with the object of my journey, which was, to discover the lost ten tribes of Israel, Ben-Israel. It is necessary first to cast a glance at the history of their wanderings, for which I take the Bible as my guide.

1) In the reign of Menachem ben Gedi, Pul, king of Assyria, invaded the land, but was induced to withdraw on the payment of a war-tax of 1000 centners of silver. (II. Kings XV. 19.) And again we find in the I. Chronicles V. 26. that the Assyria Kings Pul and Tiglath-pilneser carried away into captivity the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh, and brought them unto Halah, and Habor, and Hara, and to the shores of the river Gozan (Ganges).

2) Under Pekah ben Remaljahu, Tiglath-pilneser, King of Assyria, carried away the inhabitants of many Israelitish cities, and among the rest the whole tribe of Naphtali into Assyria. (II. Kings XV. 29. and Isaiah IX. 1.)

3) In the 9th year of the reign of Hoshea ben Elah Shalmaneser King of Assyria invaded the land. After a siege of three years he conquered Shomrom (Samaria) and carried away the remainder of the ten tribes to Assyria,

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as sacred, and in such a manner that every believer worships his own goat, which is fastened to the door of his house. They milk the animal, and then pour the milk into the sea or the river, according to the situation of the place, where they dwell: in this consists their whole worship.

They eat flesh and fowl, but have no meals in common: every one eats alone. They go without any clothing except a loose band round their middle, which is fastened on the body by a sort of girdle. The women wear short trousers, like those used for bathing, and cover the bosom with a thin veil; arms and legs are bare. The Indian women are very reserved towards strangers, and have no intercourse except with those of their own people.

Although many among them are very rich, still in the cities they lower themselves to the performance of the hardest and most repulsive labour. The colour of their skin is more like copper than that of the other Indians; they speak only Indian.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Cabul.

After a journey of nearly hundred days I arrived at this town. It is very large, and well populated. Of my brethren in the faith I found here but few, and those had wandered from Bokhara. Respecting the town and its inhabitants, I can give no accurate or detached account, as it was not possible for me to remain here for any length of time. The town in consequence of a revolution which had taken place not long before, was still in a state of excitement; the cause of which, as I heard from my brethren there, was as follows:

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returned to Jerusalem. To this I will add the remark that the name Cyrus in the Bible is called „Kores.“ — A second return took place in the reign of Artaxerxes, but only the two latter tribes made use of this permission. Hence it follows that the exiles of Israel, together with a small portion of the tribe of Levi,[1] excluded from the benefit of these two edicts, remained behind in the cities of the Medes and other places, to which they had been transported according to the above quoted texts.

Halal and *Habor* are, as I believe Chilah or Hillah and Kabur-Kefil, to which the ten tribes were banished, who were then afterwards removed further into the interior of Asia. — This subject has been likewise treated by former authors.

Skinar is the land of Kurdistan, which, according to the Targum Jeruschalmi, begins near the city of Nisibin.[2]

The word *Hamath* is explained in the first Latin Bible by „sunrise“; it means „heat“, in the further sense of the word „sun“, and consequently the place where the morning-star rises. The Hebrew expression „Hamath“ can therefore, I believe, signify all countries lying to the east of Palestine.

The islands of the West. This appellation is a very extensive one; but the discoveries of celebrated travellers allow of the conclusion that by them is meant the West Indies.

According to the credible assertion of other travellers, I subjoin the following observations:

Pathrus is, according to the Mikwe Israel, Fol. 11, p. 2, the land of Parthia on the Black Sea.

„I will bring thy seed from the east.“ In these words the Bible speaks of the scattered Israelites in the lands of Shinar, Persia, Halah and Habor, in India and China, which last place the Orientalists call Tschina.

„I will gather thee from the west“ — has reference to

[1] Ezra c. VIII. 15—20.

[2] Genesis c. X. 10. Messechet Pessachim Fol. 3. after the interpretation of the Tosefeth.

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who passionately loved her husband and cherished a blind belief in the infallibility of this religious rite, expressed herself willing. The ceremony took place, and the ashes of the young and illustrious sacrifice to a barbarous prejudice were united with those of her husband.

The father inconsolable for the loss of his only child, fell into a state of deep melancholy, and determined to put an end to this unholy custom. At the hour of midnight he caused his guards to attack the dwellings of the priests, and many of them were murdered as an atonement for the death of his daughter. This sanguinary revenge excited to revolt a great part of the population, who held to their old customs; so that the king was obliged to seek refuge with the English, in order to save himself and his throne.

These events and the general confusion in the kingdom, which resulted from them, made it impossible for me to carry out my intention of continuing my journey to the mountains of Afghanistan, and compelled me to return to Calcutta.[1]

Respecting one of the tribes which inhabits this country, I was told in Calcutta of a curious custom. On the shore of the Ganges dwells the tribe of the Barbarinades (barbarians), who do not consign their dead to the earth, but throw them into the fields. The Barbarinades likewise treat their sick in a very simple way: they take those who are seriously ill in a boat to the middle of the river; take hold of them by the ears, and dip them three times into the water: if they die under this treatment, they are finally thrown into the river; but if they survive it, they are again taken home. As soon as a patient has recovered, they dress him in a long white garment, with a rope round his waist, and a staff in his hand; without rest he is obliged to wander about like Cain, without ever being permitted to return to his own country. — The Ganges often carries to Calcutta the bodies which this tribe throws into the water.

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[1] In the French edition of this work, this passage is not clearly expressed.

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1. The Bene-Israel, or the white Jews.

The tribe, which bears this name, as well as the Canarinz, which I also consider to be partly descended from the ten tribes, has dwelt in the East Indies since the remotest ages. I have the firm conviction, and do not consider it difficult to prove, that the Bene-Israel are not only real Jews, but are likewise lineal descendants of the ten tribes, who in the time of Hoshea, the last king of Israel, were carried away by the Assyrians to Halah, Habor, the shores of the Ganges, and the cities of the Medes.

I rest my assertion on the following facts and observations:

1) The systematic and strict separation which they observe towards the heathen tribes among whom they dwell, and their endeavours to avoid all connexion with them.

2) Their exact and strict observance of the most essential precepts of the Jewish religion; for instance, of circumcision, and of the celebration of the Sabbath.

3) The extreme care they take in observing all the ancient customs with regard to the slaughter of animals, and their abstaining from those which are forbidden in the Bible.

4) Their pious veneration for the manuscripts of the Law which, — although they are unable to read them, — they preserve in their Synagogues. These manuscripts of the Law are very ancient; the writing is of a reddish colour, which can only be attributed to the work of time: in all other respects they resemble ours.

5) The name of their tribe which they have born for centuries, and by which they are known throughout Hindostan.

With respect to the descent of the Bene-Israel from the ten tribes, I add the following proofs:[1]

[1] *Ritter's Erdkunde*, Vol. 2, part 5, div. 1, Asia, p. 594 — 601, asserts that they descend from the tribe of Manasseh.

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CHAPTER XXIV.

The Jews in China.

From Cabul to Calcutta. — Journey to China. — Singapore. — Notices respecting the state of the Jews in China. — Extract from the Mikwe Israel. — Extract from the „Zeitung für Norddeutschland." — Menasse ben Israel.

From Cabul I travelled to Allahabad, Mirzapore, Benares, and Patna, and so to Calcutta. I consider it unnecessary to relate to the reader anything respecting Calcutta, since I could only repeat what must be already known. With reference to my brethren in the faith of whom about 1500 families dwell there, I can relate nothing new. They live in free and happy circumstances; some of them possess large commercial houses, and their habits and customs are similar to those of the Jews of Bagdad. They are all well educated, but have no appointed Chachamim; one of the richest commercial men of the town Ezekiel Jehuda Jacob Sliman, a very enlightened man and an excellent Talmudist, performs the duties of the Chacham. Some of the richest of our Jewish brethren there are: Joseph Ezra Kalifi, Reuben Isaac Sekar, Ezekiel Ezra Kalifi, and Sason David.

At Calcutta, I embarked in one of the ships belonging to the East India Company, and sailed for Singapore, which place I reached after a very difficult passage of 25 days. Here is a little Jewish community, whose elders are the sons of the above mentioned Ezekiel Jehuda of Calcutta. Although I remained but a very short time in Singapore, I had still the opportunity of making the acquaintance of many of the Jews settled there, of whom however I ascertained nothing particularly worthy of remark.

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the reign of Hoshea, down to our time. For a long period this important document was in the possession of the family Halagi, one of the most highly respected in the country. I had the most earnest desire to see this remarkable and interesting work; but could not succeed. A traveller who visited these parts in the former century was more fortunate; he was even permitted to copy several passages from the chronicle, which are to be found in the Mikwe Israel, and are likewise mentioned by Dr. Jost in his history, and in our first edition of this work.

Near Bombay, about two hours' distance from Barkout, is to be found a community of the Bene-Israel; they live according to patriarchal customs. Their Nassi (chief, president) was a man of the name of Babi. I was told concerning them, that before the arrival of the Europeans they had been a numerous tribe, and had been governed by a chief chosen by themselves, who had borne the title of Sheik. Being compelled to disperse, many of them had sought a place of refuge in the remotest boundaries of Hindostan, where they enjoy a certain degree of independence. The narrations of other travellers serve to corroborate these assertions; as, for instance, the account of Gildemeister, who relates that at the beginning of the Christian computation of time in India, Jewish viceroys governed, from which it may be inferred that there was a numerous population of Jews. Dr. Wilson also, who was in India in the year 1839, speaks of the Bene-Israel in the vicinity of Bombay. The Bene-Israel in this colony dwell in houses surrounded by gardens, which they cultivate themselves; they are in general wealthy, and occupy themselves in trade and agriculture. With strangers they speak the Indian language, but among themselves Tamul, in which occur many Hebrew words. The features likewise of the Bene-Israel betoken their descent; for although the influence of the country and of the climate may have produced in them some change, still the original peculiarity of feature has remained the same. But a few years since they were very ignorant with respect to

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Arnauld in Strasburg. I give it to the reader literally, as well as the certificate of its authenticity. The letter is as follows:

„Last year, and since then, a second time, a few days ago, I saw some Chinese Jews. They had come from their particular quarter of the town in Kai-fang-fu in the province of Ko-Namri, in consequence of an invitation given them by some Arabian Israelites residing there, and of some English missionaries, who were desirous of obtaining some exact particulars concerning them, as well as some Hebrew manuscripts and books. The travellers paid me a visit, and I had several conversations with them in the Hebrew language. They are known in China, and particularly in the province they inhabit, by the name of Pan-Kyin-Kian, which is said to signify „believers in sinew-tearing."* According to their belief they come from a country which they call Jou-Tack (Judah), and about 1850 since imigrated under the imperial dynasty of Khann. By another pedigree they can be followed for 800 years. A Chinese emperor had a Synagogue erected for them but it is now in ruins. They keep to their religion with that firmness which characterises the Jews up to the present day, and they only marry women of their own faith. For the last 40 years they have had no Rabbis, being too poor to be able to maintain them. They do not read Hebrew, and the whole of the present generation is uncircumcised, because men capable of performing the rite are wanting. They are not however wholly ignorant as to customs, and those which they observe quite agree with ours. They left me several Hebrew Bibles, and promised to give me a copy of their tablets of stone, which have reference to their wanderings, and are written in

* Translator's note. See Genesis c. XXXII, 32. The Jews still take great care to cut away the sinew of the thigh of such animals as they intend to eat. In many places they will not eat any of the hinder quarter; because great nicety and skill are required to take away this sinew as it should be done, and but few know how to do it with exactness.

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CHAPTER XXI.

3. The black Jews of Cochin.[1]

In this town and in its vicinity dwell about 2000 black followers of the Jewish faith: their colour however is not quite so dark as that of the negroes. They are real Jews, very religious, and tolerably well-informed. Respecting their descent, the often mentioned Mikwe Israel relates, that after the overthrow of the kingdom of Israel, about 10,000 fugitives with a great number of slaves wandered towards the southern part of Asia. The slaves, who had previously adopted the Mosaic faith, murdered their masters on this journey, and took possession of their property; but still continued faithful to Judaism.[2] This assertion does not correspond with the traditions which I collected on the spot itself; it is however possible that there were two tribes of black Jews, of which the one really descended from those slaves, while the other relates its origin as follows.

The conquest of a part of Hindostan by the Europeans had opened immense facilities for trade, and had also tempted the inhabitants of other countries to this Eldorado, to which they wandered in great numbers. Among these adventurers were many Jews, who, young and unmarried, came hither from Bagdad, Bassora, Yemin, and other parts, to seek their fortune. These young men settled themselves in the conquered provinces, and bought negro slaves, whom, when

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1 See *Ritter's Erdkunde*, Vol. 5, book 2, Asia, p. 598.

2 In the book just mentioned p. 600 it is remarked, that the black Jews believe themselves to be descended from the ten tribes.

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refuse to take money for them in exchange, saying, that they are neither able nor willing to sell them. Finally, they will even await the return of their books from England, but the missionaries refuse them every compensation in money, or in any other way. But the Jews will now return again in three months, and make their cause of complaint known to the English Ambassador."

This notice is a literal extract from a letter of my cousin Aron.

Strasburg, Nov. 13th 1855.

Aron Arnauld, Chief Rabbi.

The French original is:

J'ai vu ici l'année passée, et depuis, une seconde fois, il y a quelques jours, des coréligionnaires chinois. Ils sont venus de leur quartier principal de Kaï-fang-fou dans la province du Ko-Namri, pour se rendre à l'invitation de quelques Israélites arabes résidant ici, ainsi que de missionnaires anglais. Ces derniers désiraient se procurer des renseignements exacts et des manuscrits ou des livres hébreux. Les voyageurs sont venus me voir, et j'ai eu avec eux plusieurs conservations en chinois. Ils sont connus en Chine, et particulièrement dans la province qu'ils habitent, sous le nom de *Pan-Kyin-Kian*, ce qui signifie: *Religion des arracheurs de veines*, ou, comme on l'a traduit en anglais: *Pluck sinew religion*. Ils sont originaires d'une contrée qu'ils prononçaient: *You-Tâk* (Juda), il y a 1850 ans, sous la dynastie *Khann*. Une seconde colonne les a suivis, il y a environ 800 ans. Un empereur chinois leur a bâti une synagogue, qui est à présent négligée et tombée de vétusté. Ils observent leur foi avec cette tenacité caractéristique qui distingue la race des Hébreux, encore aujourd'hui, ils n'épousent que des femmes de leur propre réligion. Mais, depuis plus de 40 ans, ils n'ont plus de Rabbins, étant trop pauvres pour les entretenir. Ils ne savent plus lire l'hebreu, et la plupart de cette génération, ou plutôt la génération entière de notre temps n'est point circoncise, n'ayant point de circonciseurs. Ils ne sont cependant pas trop ignorants des rites, qui sont parfaitement d'accord avec les nôtres. Ils m'ont laissé quelques livres hébreux, et m'ont promis de m'envoyer une copie de tablettes de pierres, en chinois, qui ont rapport à leur émigration. Ils sont aussi de *Séphar-Thora*, *Thephilin*, *Zizis*, *Arba-Kanfoth*. Ils ont l'intention d'amener un ou deux petits garçons que ces Israélites arabes instruiront dans l'hébreu et dans les rites de notre culte. Pendant la guerre de Tartares et de Chinois, une partie d'entre eux s'est transportée dans la province de *Che-Kiang*, voisine de celle où est située notre ville, et s'est établie à *Kang-Tchou*, cité que je me propose d'aller

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a brilliant position. They have two or three Synagogues, large rooms without any decorations, round the walls of which are placed benches, and in the middle stands the the Bima (altar), from which the Pentateuch is read. The ceremonies are the same as those of the oriental Jews, but they sing the Piutim (hymnes) in the Indian manner. They follow the Talmudic laws. — Their dress has no peculiar character, but resembles that of the Bene-Israel; the rich according to the fashion of the Jews of Bagdad, the others like the Banians.

CHAPTER XXII.

Journey to Cabul. The tribes of India.

My journey to Cotchin had for its principal object the wish to see the above mentioned chronicle of the Bene-Israel; in which however I did not succeed; although I received from the natives the assurance that it was still in existence. I therefore returned to Bombay, and thence began my journey to Cabul by the following route. After seven days' journey through the mountains of Gath I arrived at Punah, and thence went on to Sholapoor, the first possession of the Mussulmans. After another journey of seven days I reached the city of Hydrabad, where ends the territory of the Mussulmans. Eleven days' journey further brought me to Crinsa on the Goubli, — nine days' journey more to Nagpore, and again eight days' journey to Rewah, which until now has belonged to the English. — I had travelled the whole way from Bombay to this place in bullock waggons. From Rewah to Mirzapore on the Ganges

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this work is published, we read a notice respecting the Jew in China, which we here subjoin, as a corroboration of ou above-mentioned statement. The article is as follows:

„It has been known for some length of time that i Kai-fang-fu in Honan is a Jewish colony. The Catholi missionaries in the last century 1704 and 1774 gave infor mation respecting it. A large sum of money, given by lady to the London Society for the conversion of Jews i order to obtain information respecting them in the country induced the Bishop of Hong-Kong, Dr. Smith, 1850 to in stitute inquiries through the London Missionary Society a Shanghai, and this society on the 25th Nov. 1850 sent ou two intelligent converted Chinese for that purpose. A Shanghai is only 600 English miles distant from Kai-fang the Chinese returned in a few days, bringing with then two Chinese Jews; the one 40, the other 45 years old one of whom possessed real Jewish features. With exceptio of their circumcision and religion, they had become quit Chinese in their language, dress, habits, and customs; the likewise bore Chinese names.

The most interesting things they brought with them wer 8 manuscripts, with fragments of the old Testament in th Hebrew language, most of them in large rolls, but a fe in smaller form, distinctly written on very thick parchment or upon sheepskins with vowel-points. The manuscript o Exodus I—VI agrees with our editions. They possess littl more than the books of Moses. The Jews are said to hav come from the north west of India to China about the thir century after Christ; at first to have remained secretly i Ning-hia, Hantcheou, and Pekin, but later to have settle in Kai-fang-fu. In 1163, the Emperor Hiao-tsung allowe them to build a Synagogue. In 1446, owing to a great in undation, most of their books and parchment rolls becam illegible, and the Jews of Ning-po and Ning-hia replace them. Between 1573 and 1620 the Synagogue and th books were burnt; in 1742 an inundation devastated th town, and they bought the Taking (the five books of Moses

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with the choicest wheat; she therefore gets extremely plump and her skin is smooth and glossy.

The worshippers of this Deity assemble daily on a spot outside the town, and form a circle, in the centre of which the cow is placed. One of the priests preaches to the believers, and takes one, or more costly vessels, in which to catch the water of the sacred cow. This is mixed with a red colour, and each priest dips his finger in it, and makes a mark over his eyebrows.

As a covering for the head the Banians wear a turban, which is not, as is usual, folded round the head, but is drawn in front over the forehead, and forms by knots their religious symbol, a horn. Their garments are white, they consist of a long robe buttoned in front, long European trousers, shoes, and stockings.

The Banians have a peculiar language, but likewise speak Indian, the language of their country. They have a particular dislike to eating flesh, even to milk, and live on vegetable diet. Their children are betrothed in their third or fourth year, but remain according to an ancient custom in the East, until maturity with their parents. If in this interval one of the betrothed should die, the survivor in condemned to perpetual widowhood, and this causes the great immorality among the women there. The latter wear a long silk generally a red garment, and when they go out a long veil, which hangs down on each side leaving the face uncovered.

The dead are not buried but burned,[1] and the ashes scattered to the wind; sometimes the family of the deceased collect some of the dust, and preserve it carefully in an urn. They do not believe in a future resurrection; with them, death is a complete dissolution of the whole being, and they therefore believe that they are acting rightly in completely destroying the body. Only children under 18 months

[1] In the Bible is also to be found a passage (I. Samuel. XXXI. 12), where a similar custom is mentioned.

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CHAPTER XXV.

Particulars respecting the Jews of Yemin (Yemen) in Afghanistan and in Tartary.

(According to the statements of travellers.)

From the often mentioned chronicle, which is to be found in the Mikwe Israel, we also learn that the Jews of Yemen in Arabia likewise descend from the ten tribes. It is possible that the members of the faith scattered in the country, after having been compelled for a while, under the oppression of barbarous rulers and people, to give up the faith of their fathers, in later times returned to Mosaism, and have remained faithful to it up to the present day; for I have found no mention that, since that time, Jews have settled in these countries.

I have collected the following statements concerning them: In the year 1522 Nibuar, a captain in the Danish navy, wo had been sent out by Frederic V, found in Yemen many Jews: especially in the capital, Sana, where he numbered almost 2000 souls; and the accounts he gives of them are most interesting.

In the year 1846, when I was at Cairo, I lived in a Caravanserai with three Jews from Sana, of whom one was tolerably well instructed in Hebrew. Among other things, I asked them about their condition and descent; they answered, that their forefathers had been settled there since the destruction of the first Temple.

In the year 1849, at Bombay, I made the acquaintance of a Chacham from the same place, who added the following to the foregoing statement. From the traditions of their

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according to the means and taste of the wearer; but it is always covered with little spots, intended to represent the stars. The fire-worshippers are dressed entirely in white like the Banians, and, as a badge of their sect, wear a red patch on their garments.

All these sects live entirely on vegetables; their disgust to meat is even greater than that of the Banians, even the mere sight of it is hateful to them. One day in Bombay I saw two officials, one on each side of the street in which was situated the public slaughter house, who, in reply to my questions, told me that a rich Parsee who dwelt there had bought from the Authorities the right of preventing the carrying-about of meat, and that he had placed them there as guards, and paid them well for it.

A particularly objectionable custom of these sects, which in March 1849, I myself witnessed in Bombay is as follows: — Each year on three successive days the Parsees assemble in an open spot; they begin then a regular scuffle; they beat each other, and throw stones and dirt, and during this time give themselves up to the most dissolute and repulsive conduct.

On another day I was witness to a sight not less remarkable. A fire broke out in the town, and while from all sides the inhabitants hurried to the spot to extinguish the flames, the worshippers of that element, which was then committing such fearful ravages, threw themselves on the ground as if enchanted, and prayed.

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6. The Hindoos.

Of all the tribes which inhabit the country, the Hindoos, the original Indians, are the coarsest and the most uncivilised. Neither the heavenly bodies nor the elements, have they as Deity; but they borrow it from the animal world, and find it in that lowly animal — the goat. This they reverence

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several tribes, partly stationary, partly nomadic, some of whom still bear ancient biblical names. Thus are found there the Hagarites, of whom it is mentioned in the Bible that they waged war with the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh; and most likely carried them away captive to Halah and Habor;[1] also the Togarnites and the Aramites.

These wild but still hospitable tribes plunder the caravans, and carry the travellers away into slavery if they pretend to offer any resistance. — The caravan, with which our traveller passed through the desert, met with just such a fate; and the conquerors led the rest of the travellers to their village. There they were examined to see if any one from a friendly tribe should be among them; during the course of this investigation it came to the turn of our traveller and his companion, who both declared themselves to be Jews, and my acquaintance gave himself out as a Hakim-Baschi. His master expressed himself much pleased at this, gave him a decent lodging, and treated him very respectfully. The other Jew, who had no title to boast of, and was not so learnedly educated, was treated with much severity, and made to labour in the fields. The pretended physician had continually patients to prescribe for, and chance favoured his cures. Six months thus passed without making the smallest change in the condition of the two prisoners. Our traveller, however, had remarked that his master was very avaricious, and he took advantage of this and said to him one day: „What benefit do you derive from supporting me?“ (for the patients paid nothing:) „Should any of my religion live somewhere in the vicinity, conduct me and my brother to them, and they will ransom us.“

To this his master answered that six days' journey distant in the desert lived some Jews, with whom his tribe was on friendly terms; and after some persuasion he expressed himself willing to conduct his two prisoners thither. Joined by several companions, he set out with them

[1] I. Chronicles c. V. 19. 20. 26.

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A general belief prevails there in Metampsychosis, and the resurrection of the body; which latter however cannot take place unconditionally; but the right to it can only be obtained by a living being voluntarily sacrificing itself with the dead. If a man dies, leaving no children, his wife is immediately burnt with his body, for this soul full of life will serve the dead at the resurrection of the first-born soul, and then follows a second union of this faithful couple.*

The ceremonies of this human sacrifice are as follows: The body is laid out in a room for the space of eight days, but the survivor (man or woman) is ornamented, and conducted into a princely palace. In her or his presence, dancing, music, and games succeed each other, and three times daily the inhabitants of the place come and fall down before him as before a Deity. On the eighth day the survivor is splendidly apparelled, and carried with the body out of the town to a certain place, where a little house is erected of very dry and combustible wood, in which the dead is placed. The survivor is then solemnly carried seven times round the little house in which procession all, even children, take a part. After each turn all those present fall down before him. After the seventh turn they take from the sacrifice the ornaments and garments, and place it with the deceased in the little house of the dead, which is then set fire to at all four corners. In order to drown the shrieks of the sacrifice, the whole assembly join in hymns, amid the noise and discordant sounds of tambourines. When all is reduced to ashes, they collect the remains of the deceased couple in an urn, and some time afterwards place them in a sepulchre.

The king of Cabul had an only daughter, whose husband had died. Immediately after his decease, the priests came to the young widow with the request that she should comply with the sacred custom; for which the princess,

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* Orig.: „the first-born“ or original „Soul“; the Soul possessed by the defunct in this world. (Translator's note.)

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for two months, a caravan at last arrived, and our traveller joined it; but his companion, who had married in the meantime, remained behind. After a dangerous journey of seventeen days, he reached Cabul; from thence proceeded to Calcutta, and later to Bombay, where I made his acquaintance.

During my stay at Cabul, I received from a fellow-believer there a confirmation of the above statement, and ascertained that the Jews of Balach, thirteen days' journey from Cabul, had ransomed him.

But the Jew was unable to answer my principal question respecting the origin of these tribes, or the time when they settled in the desert. In the memoranda of which I was robbed, I had noted down several particulars concerning them, which have now escaped my memory.

Thus, even to this day, Jewish tribes are wandering among the nomadic tribes of the desert.

In Bombay I became acquainted with a fellow-believer from Bokhara, named Messiah; from whom I obtained information respecting the Jews dwelling there. My acquaintance had been obliged to flee from Bokhara, because he had given shelter in his house to an English missionary. He was pursued by the treacherous police of the Governor of Bokhara, who allows no European to enter his country, and much less does he allow the circulation of books. The missionary he had saved had afterwards written him a letter full of the liveliest expressions of thanks; and this letter I myself have seen. — He told me that nearly 2500 Jewish families live at Bokhara and in the neighbourhood, who support themselves by trade, agricultural labour, and mechanical employment. They are obliged to wear on their garments a piece of old stuff, by which they can be distinguished from the Tartars. He likewise related that a great number of Jews dwell in the north of the country, near the Russian frontier; a fact, which is confirmed by

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What the Jews of Cabul related respecting the inhabitants of Afghanistan, corresponds with what the Courier-Litewski of the 8th October 1828 reports. This paper, which appears in Wilna, speaks as follows on this subject: „The inhabitants of Afghanistan are descended from the ten tribes. They comprise about 4,300,000 souls, who are all nomadic. They form an independent people, have princes, and a government of their own, and their bravery in their wars with the English is well known."[1]

I hope in my next journey to be able to investigate this country more accurately, and I beseech the Eternal to guide thiter my steps.

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[1] *Ritter's Erdkunde* 3. book, Vol. 8, p. 189. The Jews belong to the most remarkable of these strangers in Afghanistan, and the number of them there is very considerable. They are thought to be descendants of the ten tribes of Israel, who,having been made captive by the Medes did not return to Jerusalem, but later, in the beginning of the caliphat, like many Nestorian Christian communities of Upper Asia perished by the sword of Mahomed or submitted to him; those in Bokhara (Benjamin of Tudela advanced as far as to them), Cashmere and Afghanistan resisted and endured cruel persecutions; but the greater part of them yielded. Many who had remained true to the faith of their fathers retreated to the extreme part of the upper country. The Afghans believe that they themselves are descendants of Israel; and according to Vansittart (in Asiat. Res, part 2) direct descendants of King Saul. Buchanan maintains that the number of Afghans really descended from the Jews can be but small, as their tribes are so very different even in language, feature and religion. At present very many Jews live in Cabul, whose commercial transactions lead them through the whole of Upper Asia to China. Abut 60 of these ancient Jewish colonies are mentioned in Upper Asia, India, and China, and a most intimate and lively connection is said to exist among them. No place could be more conventient as a link of communication than Cabul. Buchanan shows that there are two kinds of Jewish tribes in the more remote parts of Asia; the old or dark coloured Jews, which are hardly to be distinguished from the Hindoos, and live beyond the Indus, — and the light coloured Jews, who, according to their own assertion only emigrated here after the second destruction of the Temple. Al. Burnes has given us no new tidings respecting these Jews in Cabul.

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the Jews of Bokhara. — The accounts respecting this country are so doubtful, — it is so seldom visited, and so little known, that I considered myself very fortunate to have obtained this faithful report of the Jews there. The corroboration of Rubinstein, who possessed a thorough knowledge of the Hebrew and other languages, and who had travelled many long years in these remote regions, was a valuable testimony for me. Like myself, he had also had the misfortune to be robbed of all his memoranda at the plundering of a caravan in the desert of Sahara, on his return from Timbuctoo.

Salomon says: „Heaviness in the heart maketh it stoop; but a good word maketh it glad.“[1]

My cares are not personal. — The great past and the immortal deeds of the people to whom I belong alone occupy me. My thoughts are fixed upon the remnants of them scattered in the world, upon those, whom fate has hitherto hidden from our eyes. My aim is to seek out the great family of Israel, — the members of which often do not recognise themselves; and who in many countries eat the bread of exile from Egypt and Babylon, wet with their tears and moistened with their blood. I will speak to them words of truth and words of consolation; and with the torch of our sacred history in my hand, will carry light among them. The Eternal, who sees all, and knows all, has likewise seen my deeds, — none of my wishes and intentions are unknown to Him. He will guide and protect me, He will give me strength to carry on the work which has been begun. He will inspire my fellow-believers to help me, so that I may again turn my steps to those sacred spots, the places of the glory of our forefathers. He will lead me from the West, where my brethren know all that is beauti-

[1] Proverbs c. XII. 25.

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Notwithstanding an indisposition, which took place in consequence of my wearisome journey, I determined to proceed by an English packet boat to Canton, which voyage lasted six days. Among my fellow-travellers I had a brother Israelite from Bombay, who was likewise proceeding to Canton. In the city of Canton itself no Jews are settled, though merchants from the remotest parts are to be found passing through the place. Immediately after my arrival I experienced a violent attack of fever, which compelled me to keep my bed for twenty days; and as I ascribed my illness to the climate, I again embarked to return to Bombay, and there my health soon really improved.

The whole advantage my work derived from this journey to China was confined to some information I obtained from my brethren in the faith. From them I ascertained that no Jews dwell in the vicinity of Canton; but on the other side of the Yellow River there is a tribe, which every two or three years sends a considerable caravan to Canton with spices, colonial goods, dyes, tea, and other produce of the country. The people belonging to this caravan are known by the name of Havaia or Havaists, and pass for Jews. In fact the Hebrew word „Havaia“ (derived from I. H. W. H.) significies „eternal, immortal.“ Thus in this country, where people are named after their worship, Havaists would signify worshippers of the Eternal, a name which is very significant for the followers of Moses. I do not however venture by this translation of a word to prove the descent of this tribe: in order however to give it more weight, I add the verse from Isaiah which I have already quoted: „These shall come from Shinar.“ According to the most credible accounts, Shinar is China.

Without doubt I should have been more fortunate in my researches, had I been able to institute them personally; but from want of an account of my own, I add an important communication respecting the Jews in China, a letter written by a fellow-believer living there, for which I am indebted to the kindness of his cousin, the chief Rabbi Aron

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came nearer, we found they were flying-fish, — a sure sign, that land was far distant. We had placed all our hope on the steersman, who was an old and experienced sailor; and we implored him to use all his powers to rescue us from the threatened danger. After that we all went together to the captain, and begged him to give up the command of the ship to the steersman, who knew these parts perfectly. He consented. Our water and provisions were served out in considerably smaller rations.

This melancholy state of things lasted until the eighteenth day, when food began to fail completely. In this distress we distilled sea-water, in order to quench our thirst.[1] On the nineteenth day, the captain himself went to the top mast, and with his telescope observed the horizon. After a survey of an hour and a half he came down, looking pale and disturbed. In the evening he began his survey anew; and he saw a grey stripe in the ocean. Was it land, or was it one of those wonderful delusive appearances, which are so dangerous to erring seamen? — Tired and exhausted, I went down to the cabin, leaving my servant on deck. Hardly had I descended, when a huge wave threw him down. I called out to him: „Are you drunk?“ — He answered: „Try it yourself, and you will see.“ — Immediately I went again on deck, over which at that moment dashed an enormous foaming wave, which struck me down. I believed myself lost, and was not a little astonished when, a few minutes afterwards, I became again conscious. The sails were torn — the mast broken — and the deck flooded with water. The storm continued to rage with unabated fury; and the ship, like a lost creature, was at the mercy of every wave. We had given up all hope, and saw the grave open before us. At this moment all the passengers,

[1] This is effected by means of sinking a vessel called Tanasa, made of a certain kind of red earth, the aperture of which is stopped. The vessel takes in a quantity of sea-water; of which, when the vessel is again drawn on board, the water oozes out, while the salt remains behind. In this manner a tolerably drinkable water can be obtained.

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Chinese letters. They also possess the Sefer Thora (Pentateuch), Tephilim (for the ceremonies of daily service), Zizith, and Arba Kanfoth. They intend to bring one or two boys here, in order to have them instructed by the Arabian Israelites in Hebrew, and in the rites of our worship. During the wars of the Tartars with the Chinese, a part of them went to the neighbouring province She-Kiang, and settled in Kangcheou, which city I have the intention to visit. Many of them went to Arnoy in the province of Fokien. These homeless people are scattered in Pekin, and in the whole of China, and live everywhere in the same state of degradation and ignorance. In Kangcheou and Arnoy there are no Synagogues. In Kai-fang-fu their number amount to nearly 10,000; in Tchangcheou to be tween 1000 and 2000; in Arnoy they are more numerous.

Their features resemble those of the Mongols: those I have seen are very intelligent and well instructed with respect to their Chinese education and knowledge. They speak the language of the Mandarins, and still make use of some biblical names, such as Moses, Aaron, etc. They likewise know the names of Jerusalem and Mizraim (Egypt), whence they say they have come. They likewise speak of the bondage of the Jews in Egypt, and possess several fragments of our history, religion, customs, and habits, which they have obtained from tradition.

The English missionaries have gained possession of a very ancient Pentateuch, which was in the possession of these Jews, and sent it to England: they obtained it by making them believe at first that they only wanted to inspect and copy it, and then offering to purchase it. As some cheating took place with respect to the sum of money paid by the English missionaries, the Jews desired to have their Pentateuch restored to them, which, it was pretended, had been sent to England. They have come back again this year to have this affair arranged, in order that they may be able to justify themselves to their community, and demand with right the restoration of their books; for they

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officials of the consul, who were commissioned to fetch me. Astonished at such a reception, I accompanied them, and had the joy of finding in the consul a fellow-believer. His name is Hasi Ezekiel; he is from Bagdad, and has discharged the office of consul for the last eleven years as successor to his father-in-law Reuben. This man is the only Jew in Mascat, with the exception of his black household, whom he has converted to Mosaism.

The town has a very beautiful synagogue, in which are some ancient Pentateuchs. In the court-yard of the synagogue is a bath for women, which was formerly used for religious purification. Several centuries ago the Jews of Mascat were visited by the plague, which carried off great numbers; the remainder left the place. I likewise visited the old burial-place of the community, round which now rise the tents of the Arabs. In Mascat I met several fellow-worshippers from neighbouring cities. The inhabitants are fond of the Jews, whom they call Walad-Sara (children of Sarah).

Mascat formerly belonged to the Portuguese, and was fortified by them; later it was conquered by the Abyssinians. An Iman now rules there, supported by England. The town is the most important commercial place of Arabia, and the pearl-trade, in which the Bedouins are chiefly engaged, is very considerable. The town itself is large, but dirty; it lies at the foot of great mountains, and is surrounded by them. The population amounts to about 60,000 souls. The air is unhealthy, chiefly caused by the dead fishes, which are found in great masses in the streets. After heavy falls of rain, rapid streams form in the mountains, which carry with them into the sea, all kinds of rubbish.

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visiter, et une autre partie est à *Arnoy*, dans la province Fo-Kien. Il existe de ces émigrés également à *Pékin* et par toute la Chine, mais toujours dans le même état de décadence et d'ignorance. A *Kang-Tchou* et *Arnoy* ils n'ont point de synagogue. Leur nombre à *Kaï-fang-fou* monte environ à 10,000; à *Kang-Tchou* il est de 1000 à 2000; ils sont plus nombreux à *Arnoy*. On m'avait amené aussi un Israélite de *Kang-Tchou*. Leurs traits sont presqu'entièrement conformes au type de la race des *Mongols*. Ceux que j'ai vus ici sont très-intelligents et bien instruits, j'entends en fait d'éducation et d'instruction chinoise. Ils ne parlent que le *mandarin*, mais ils se servent encore de noms bibliques, tels que Moïse, Aaron etc. Ils savent aussi les noms de Mizraïm, Jérusalem, d'où ils disent être venus, racontent l'esclavage et les servitudes des Hébreux en Egypte, enfin ils possèdent des fragments, des débris de notre histoire, de notre religion, de nos moeurs et de nos coutumes; notions qui leur ont été conservées uniquement par tradition.

Les missionaires anglais ont accaparé des *Sephar-Thora*, très antiques, et les ont envoyés en Angleterre; je dis accaparé, car les Chinois que les missionnaires ont envoyés à *Kaï-fang-fou* ne leur disaient pas que l'on voulait les acheter, et leur faisaient accroire que l'on ne désirait que les voir ou les copier. Quant à l'argent envoyé par les missionnaires anglais, comme il y avait eu des malversations, les Israélites, avant leur départ, demandaient la restitution des *Sephar-Thora* qu'on leur a dit avoir été envoyés en Angleterre. Ils sont revenus cette année-ci pour tâcher d'arranger cette affaire, afin de se justifier vis-à-vis de leur communauté. Ils réclament avec justice la restitution des livres, et refusent d'accepter de l'argent, en disant qu'ils ne peuvent et ne veulent pas les vendre. — Enfin ils consentent à attendre qu'on les ait fait revenir d'Anglettere; mais les missionnaires leur refusent toute satisfaction, soit en argent, soit autrement. Ils comptent revenir encore dans trois mois pour faire valoir leurs réclamations auprés du consul anglais.

Cette notice est extraite littéralement d'une lettre écrite par mon cousin Aaron.

Strasbourg, le 13 novembre 1855.

Aaron Arnauld, Grand-Rabbin.

In the Mikwe Israel there is an account of the Jews in China, a report of the missionary Matthias Bachia, which we gave in the first edition of this work, and to which we only allude, as it is almost generally known.

In the *Zeitung für Norddeutschland* (Nr. 2797, Evening Edition, March 1st 1858), which appears in the town where

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Persia. On the opposite side of the Persian Gulf in the interior of Arabia, the desert extends to Aden, Medina and Mecca. The pilgrims who have visited the city of the Prophet report, that on the road they met with sixteen tribes of whom four bear the name of Ihud Cheibar (a name of terror to the Arabs), and belong to the Mosaic faith. I have heard this fact not only from Mahomedan pilgrims, but also from my fellow-worshippers at Bagdad. These tribes are said to form among the Nomads a confederacy of their own, and like the rest plunder the caravans.[1]

Not far from Bender Abassi lies the island of Rein, which is celebrated for its pearl fishery. Somewhat further on is the town of Linsa. It is governed by an almost independent sheik, who has money coined, which has value among the Arabs, who inhabit his little territory. Ships stop near Linsa, for the purpose of taking in provisions; in other respects the town is unimportant.

Three days' journey from Linsa begins the Persian boundary, which is marked by Arab camps. At this place our ship stranded in a storm. The captain, who was fearful of being plundered, sought out the commander of the sentinels placed on the frontier, and offered him presents, whereby he obtained protection for passengers and luggage. Afterwards we purchased there eggs and vegetables.

[1] The celebrated traveller Dr. H. Petermann in Berlin related to me himself that in his travels he had likewise obtained information respecting these tribes, from a physician: — from which account it appears that they are really Jews, although they possess no Talmud: — he at the same time expressed the wish that these tribes might be sought out. The dwelling-place of these tribes is twelve days' journey from Dsheddah, on the road to Mecca. According to the statement of this physician, they had, in the place where he visited them, 40,000 tents. Near to them dwell the Jam, an Arab tribe. — Benjamin of Tudela p. 71, 72, speaks of these tribes, and reckons them as descended from the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh. — *Ritter's Erdkunde* Vol. 13, p. 403—407 gives information from different sources about these tribes. We hope to visit them in our second journey, in order to be able at last to gain certain intelligence respecting them.

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of a Mohamedan from Ning-hia, who had them from a Jew at Canton. P. Kögler saw this book. There are now about 200 individuals in and about Kai-fang-fu. Their family names are quite Chinese. A few of them keep shops, some are peasants; but the most of them are so poor, — without clothing or shelter, — that they sell the materials of the Synagogue, in order to keep themselves alive. They celebrate the Sabbath on Saturday. The boys are circumcised within a month after their birth. They wash themselves before entering the Synagogue (Li-pai-fu), which consists of three naves; and for this purpose there is a bath on each side of the Sanctuary. During divine service they turn the face towards the West, towards Jerusalem. A Hebrew teacher is said to have died here about fifty years since; now there is no one able to read Hebrew. In China the Jews as well as the Mahomedans are able to attain to all offices and honours. Like the Chinese, they call God, Shangtti. After the example of the Chinese, in their place of prayer they likewise honour their holy men (Tching-jin), such as Abraham and others. Insignificant as this colony is in itself, it is still remarkable; for it shows how the firm nationality of the Jews in some degree overpowers even the nationality of the Chinese.

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with terror the words: „A Jew is among us!“ — I tu round; a Persian pointed his gun at me and fired, but bullet whistled by me. The Caravan-Baschi, who with m others had run to the spot, wrested the weapon from hands of the perpetrator, who cried out in a rage: „A is daring to contaminate our company!“ — „How do know he is a Jew?“ asked the Baschi. Because I h seen him pray and put on his sandals!“ The Baschi tu pale, but immediately answered: „Perhaps you are mistal but be it as it may, Jew or Mussulman, I answer for safety with my head, and must deliver him up unhar at the house of the vice-consul of Shiraz.“ — Nobody tured to dispute the authority of the commander, for were all too much accustomed to obey. This quieted disturbance, and the affair was soon forgotten.

Two days later, we passed through several nar roads overhung with enormous masses of rock. It wa ready night when two shots were heard, and we found selves attacked from behind and in front, and the ou of the road were occupied by robbers. A fierce con followed, but, owing to our position, all could not take in it, and the struggle continued until daybreak. We saw there had been some mistake, for in the front of caravan we found friends, while behind us the combat continued. Supported by our new allies, we soon succee in putting our assailants to flight.

On the second day after this occurence we came beautiful plain with dwellings and magnificent plantati which refreshed us like an Oasis. Accompanied by servant, I had withdrawn from the caravan, without rem ing that we were followed by two Persians. The passed; the caravan was no longer to be seen, and I ceeded towards a village close by. Then, for the first t I observed that we were followed by the two Persi whose appearance denoted no good. I had alledged th could not speak Persian, while my servant was quite ma of the language; so we heard how our two pursuers

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forefathers, the Jews of Sana, had heard that Ezra, after his sojourn at Babylon, had visited the exiles of Yemen, in order to induce them to return to their country. But this they refused to do, as they imagined that this liberation would not be as general or as lasting as that from the bondage of Egypt, and because they would not expose themselves to renewed persecution. Enraged at this refusal, Ezra had given utterance to a curse upon them, prophesying against them continued misery and oppression. They also had cursed and blasphemed Ezra, beseeching God not to permit him to see Jerusalem again. — This double curse appears to have been fulfilled: Ezra's tomb is in the desert between Bagdad and Bassora, as we have already mentioned; and the Jews of Yemen languish in the most cruel debasement and in the deepest poverty unto the present day.

The Danish captain whom we have named likewise relates, that in the vicinity of Sana, and in Arabia Felix, there are many Jews, who in the midst of the desert live as independent tribes.

Even at the time of the Maimonides the existence of Jews in these localities was known; for I myself have possessed the copy of a letter which was addressed to the Jews of Yemen. However, up to this day no one has thought of seeking information respecting our brethren in the faith in these parts.

In Bombay I became acquainted with a Jew from Bagdad, who had travelled through Persia, and had there acquired a little fortune. He related to me the following, respecting our fellow-believers:

In the year 1847, he, in company with another Jew, had travelled with merchandise from Teheran to Bokhara in little Tartary. Half way, about eighteen days' journey from Teheran, lies Meshed; from thence to Bokhara is about twenty-two days' journey; and from this latter town to Cabul extends a desert of great extent, which is inhabited by

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circumcised in secret. Nine synagogues in the town testify the former greatness of the Jewish community; now unfortunately, they are almost all laid waste. The Jews of Shiraz speak the Hebrew language, almost like the Askenasim (german Jews).

On my arrival I found the town in a state of ferment and revolt in consequence of a change of government in Teheran. Fierce combats took place in the streets, and it was not until the evening that the tumult was calmed. The vice-consul received me into his house, and gave me a safe escort to the Nassi, Mullah Israel. This Nassi, a venerable old man, received me with the greatest kindness, and according to Eastern custom, gave me an hospitable shelter, and I lodged with his son Isaac.

My presence had quickly become known among the brethren of the faith, and I was soon visited by the leading members. From morning until night I was in request, my advice and help asked in many matters, and my opinions regarded as oracles. One day my room became gradually filled by women all wearing white veils, who, one after another, introduced themselves to me. As the Jewish women are allowed only to wear black veils, in order to distinguish them from others, this visit desquieted me, for I imagined the house might be attacked by insurgents. I was, however, pacified when they told me that all these women belonged to the families who had been compelled to embrace the faith of Islam, but who in secret adhered to the faith of their fathers. My visitors lifted their veils, and kissed my forehead and hand. I addressed some words to them on their apostacy, whereupon the women wept bitterly. One of the men present came forward and said: „Our brethren know under what fearful circumstances we were compelled to apostatise: we did it to save ourselves from tyranny and death. We acknowledge, however, that, notwithstanding our apparent apostacy, we still cling with all our hearts to the faith of our fathers, and this we testify by our presence here this day; for if it were known, we

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on the way, and they arrived at the village of the Jews. Before reaching it, he left the prisoners under the charge of his companions, and went himself to the chief of the place. When the latter heard that two of his brethren in the faith were captives, he immediately hurried out of the village to them. He asked them from what country they came; to which our traveller replied that they were from Babel (Bagdad). „The name of Babel is known to us," said the Jew, „for we know that our fathers were once there in bondage; yet we have never seen an inhabitant of that country. — The acquaintance having been thus made, the ransom was discussed, for which the master of the two prisoners demanded an exhorbitant sum. But the chief of the Jewish village answered: „We will pay the usual sum for these two men: if you will not accept that, we will take them from you by force." As this threat was supported by numerous inhabitants of the village who had been drawn to the spot, the matter was soon arranged; and a ransom was paid for both the prisoners of 1200 karans (a Persian silver coin, worth five piasters; the whole sum amounting therefore to 6000 piasters); and the liberated captives were then conducted into the village with rejoicings.

Our traveller then enquired if any other Jewish tribes dwelt in the vicinity, and received for answer that several other Jewish tribes lived at a distance of ten days' journey; that the road to them was very dangerous, on account of its being infested by nomadic hordes of robbers; but if he wished to visit these brethren in the faith, it would be best to wait until he could join a strong caravan passing that way: fearing to fall again into captivity, he remained. A wife, a house, and a piece of land were offered to him, and he was entreated to settle himself among them; however our traveller refused; for he was already married, and longed to return to his family. They tried to console him, telling him, that he should have patience; that from time to time a caravan passed by, which was always joined by some Jews, and with such a caravan he could depart. After waiting anxiously

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for help and protection. I said that I was a poor pilgrim, and therefore *could* not help them; but they answered: „You are a learned man, and God is with you; you *can* save us.“ Thus urged, I advised that they should all assemble in a large house, and arrange a festive entertainment, that at the same time they should all be well armed, should barricade all the entrances, and then, trusting in God's help, await the result. Happily the report was without consequences.

A few months before my arrival, the Nassi Mullah Eliahu had drawn upon himself the ill-will of the Imaum, and was thrown into prison. The Imaum demanded such an enormous ransom for his release, that the community was unable to pay it. It was then proposed to him that, in order to be free, he should embrace the Islam faith. The prisoner declared, himself ready to do so, and was conducted before the Cadi. As, however, many preparations are requisite before the ceremony takes place, the Nassi sought to gain time by having this deferred. The Imaum made inquiries as to the reason of this delay, on which the Nassi declared that he withdrew his word, as he could not make up his mind to abjure at his age a religion, which he had followed the whole of his life. Without further parley, the Imaum ordered him to receive 500 filagos (blows) on the soles of his feet, and then to be thrown into a damp dungeon. Four days successively this was repeated, so that the unhappy Nassi received 2000 blows. Without movement, with his face to the ground and like a dead man, he lay in that dungeon. Bread and water was all his food, and he would certainly have fallen a victim to these tortures and sufferings, if Providence had not rescued him. During this time a tumult broke out, and on this occasion the rebels released all prisoners, among whom was the Nassi. He then repaired to Bagdad, and it was there I made his acquaintance some time afterwards. His fortune the Imaum had appropriated to himself.

Another circumstance, which may give an idea of the

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on the way, and they arrived at the village of the Jews. Before reaching it, he left the prisoners under the charge of his companions, and went himself to the chief of the place. When the latter heard that two of his brethren in the faith were captives, he immediately hurried out of the village to them. He asked them from what country they came; to which our traveller replied that they were from Babel (Bagdad). „The name of Babel is known to us," said the Jew, „for we know that our fathers were once there in bondage; yet we have never seen an inhabitant of that country. — The acquaintance having been thus made, the ransom was discussed, for which the master of the two prisoners demanded an exhorbitant sum. But the chief of the Jewish village answered: „We will pay the usual sum for these two men: if you will not accept that, we will take them from you by force." As this threat was supported by numerous inhabitants of the village who had been drawn to the spot, the matter was soon arranged; and a ransom was paid for both the prisoners of 1200 karans (a Persian silver coin, worth five piasters; the whole sum amounting therefore to 6000 piasters); and the liberated captives were then conducted into the village with rejoicings.

Our traveller then enquired if any other Jewish tribes dwelt in the vicinity, and received for answer that several other Jewish tribes lived at a distance of ten days' journey; that the road to them was very dangerous, on account of its being infested by nomadic hordes of robbers; but if he wished to visit these brethren in the faith, it would be best to wait until he could join a strong caravan passing that way: fearing to fall again into captivity, he remained. A wife, a house, and a piece of land were offered to him, and he was entreated to settle himself among them; however our traveller refused; for he was already married, and longed to return to his family. They tried to console him, telling him, that he should have patience; that from time to time a caravan passed by, which was always joined by some Jews, and with such a caravan he could depart. After waiting anxiously

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CHAPTER XXX.

Ispahan.

Occurences on the journey. — Arrival at Ispahan. — The Minister Ismael.

My stay in Shiraz lasted twenty-one days; after which I continued my journey to Ispahan. The vice-consul took care that I should join a caravan of more than 2000 men going to Ispahan, and it was thus that under the safest possible protection I began a journey of 22 days, attended with great dangers and toils, through a barren tract of country.[1] By his advice I gave myself out for a physician, and assumed an European dress.

The third day after our departure we were attacked by one of the numerous bands of robbers, which we repulsed, however, without any serious loss to ourselves, and gained a booty of several horses; I soon found an opportunity of proving my abilities in my new calling of physician: During the next few days, three of the most important merchants belonging to our caravan became ill. With trust in the help of God, and the remedies in my travelling medecine chest, I attended to the patients, and succeeded in restoring them to health. By this I gained for myself three friends, whose gratitude protected and saved me in a time of great danger.

In order to shelter myself from the burning rays of the

[1] Benjamin of Tudela p. 82 gives the distance from Shiraz to Ispahan as 4 days' journey. I do not know which way he went, for when the caravans go quickly, they want at least 15 to 18 days.

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on the way, and they arrived at the village of the Jews. Before reaching it, he left the prisoners under the charge of his companions, and went himself to the chief of the place. When the latter heard that two of his brethren in the faith were captives, he immediately hurried out of the village to them. He asked them from what country they came; to which our traveller replied that they were from Babel (Bagdad). „The name of Babel is known to us," said the Jew, „for we know that our fathers were once there in bondage; yet we have never seen an inhabitant of that country. — The acquaintance having been thus made, the ransom was discussed, for which the master of the two prisoners demanded an exhorbitant sum. But the chief of the Jewish village answered: „We will pay the usual sum for these two men: if you will not accept that, we will take them from you by force." As this threat was supported by numerous inhabitants of the village who had been drawn to the spot, the matter was soon arranged; and a ransom was paid for both the prisoners of 1200 karans (a Persian silver coin, worth five piasters; the whole sum amounting therefore to 6000 piasters); and the liberated captives were then conducted into the village with rejoicings.

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reached within two days' journey the goal of our long pilgrimage, when we were attacked by a horde of robbers consisting of 2000 men. As we were in the vicinity of a caravanserai, we were able to save ourselves, and act on the defensive. For a day and a half we were engaged in the most obstinate struggle, and our distress had reached its highest point, when we tried to obtain help by means of messengers, whom we sent to Ispahan. They succeeded in getting away safely, and on the third day native troops came to our rescue, with whose assistance we routed the bandits, who left behind them several of their wounded. — Three hours' journey from Ispahan we were again attacked; as, however, the noise of the firing could be heard in the city, help was at once sent to us, and thus we surmounted the last danger of our journey.

We entered Ispahan in the morning, and immediately on my arrival I visited the English consul, who received me very kindly. I then sought out my brethren in the faith, who where all much astonished that I had so happily surmounted the dangers of a journey through such barren parts, — parts which even numerous and well armed caravans scarcely ventured to traverse — particularly during the political tumults, which had lately taken place in consequence of a change of government.

Ispahan is the greatest city in the kingdom of Persia. The perfectly beautiful situation, the rich and luxuriant vegetation, the abundance and beauty of which pen scarcely can describe, offer food enough for reflection and admiration to the traveller, and awakened in me the remembrance of the magnificent regions of the East. — About 400 Jewish families live in the city, they possess 3 synagogues and 8 Mullahs (Chacham).[1]

During my stay in Ispahan, I had the good fortune to meet there the Minister Ismael, a native Jew named Jekutiel, whom the dispensation of Providence had raised to this

[1] Benjamin of Tudela p. 82 speaks of 15,000 Jews.

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on the way, and they arrived at the village of the Jews. Before reaching it, he left the prisoners under the charge of his companions, and went himself to the chief of the place. When the latter heard that two of his brethren in the faith were captives, he immediately hurried out of the village to them. He asked them from what country they came; to which our traveller replied that they were from Babel (Bagdad). „The name of Babel is known to us," said the Jew, „for we know that our fathers were once there in bondage; yet we have never seen an inhabitant of that country. — The acquaintance having been thus made, the ransom was discussed, for which the master of the two prisoners demanded an exhorbitant sum. But the chief of the Jewish village answered: „We will pay the usual sum for these two men: if you will not accept that, we will take them from you by force." As this threat was supported by numerous inhabitants of the village who had been drawn to the spot, the matter was soon arranged; and a ransom was paid for both the prisoners of 1200 karans (a Persian silver coin, worth five piasters; the whole sum amounting therefore to 6000 piasters); and the liberated captives were then conducted into the village with rejoicings.

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the Shah was deserted by his troops, and left alone and without shelter: his faithful Ismael alone remained, and both owed their preservation to the speed of their horses.

When the Shah perceived his faithful servant following him, he called out to him: „Save yourself if you can, and leave me to my fate.“ — But Ismael answered: I will not leave you, oh Master; I will save myself with you, or I will perish.“ — The fugitives gained a wood, in which they wandered about for the space of six days. The Shah thought they would perish of hunger, but Ismael shared with him the remains of some biscuit and water. When this slender store was exhausted, the noble youth mounted his horse and rode away to seek for food. After a long search, he at length fell in with a Persian from whom he obtained some bread, and with that he rode back. But when he arrived at the spot where he had left the Shah, he was no longer there. In despair he prayed to God, and rushed through the wood in all directions calling him by name. At last he found his master, but in a half famished state, and refreshed him with the bread. Finally on the seventh day, the two fugitives were discovered by some horsemen, who had been sent out to the rescue of the Shah.

In consequence of this fidelity and devotion, the Shah, as soon as he had returned to Teheran raised his favorite Ismael to be the first minister of his kingdom, and this high post he filled with the greatest zeal up to the death of the Shah. Without becoming proud, he remembered with love those belonging to him, and became an unwearied protector of his former brethren in the faith. When the Shah was near his end, he had his son called to him, and solemnly recommended to him the minister Ismael as his friend, his most faithful servant, and most honest adviser; and he begged the heir of his throne to respect the noble servant as such and allow him to retain his high office. After the death of the Shah, envy and jealousy endeavoured to render the minister an object of suspicion to the young ruler, and to bring him into disgrace. An

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other travellers to these parts. It is known that they have dwelt there for several centuries, and that formerly they bade defiance to powerful neighbouring kings.[1]

An Israelitish merchant from Tabur, whom I met in the year 1850 at Teheran, related that in that town, and in the districts round about, dwell about 12,000 Jewish families; and he added that in Great Tartary the Jews had built cities, the names of which he mentioned to me. The time of their settlement is said to date from the 6th century. Persecuted by the Chinese, who endeavoured to compel them to abandon their faith, they had settled in Great Tartary, and there they lived free, and on the best terms with the natives. The chiefs were chosen equally from among the Jews and Tartars, and both shared alike the dangers of war; but the Jews contracted no marriages with the Tartars, and adhered strictly to their own worship. It is worthy of note, that they all believe themselves to be descended from the tribe of Reuben. — I afterwards asked him if they possessed the scriptures, prayer-books, or any guide for the regulation of their rites, to which he replied, that a Polish Jew, who had visited them about 40 years before, had given them a complete Bible, which however they were not able to read; that he himself had given instruction to several among them, and later had sent them Bibles and Pentateuchs. — They perform several of our practical religious ceremonies without understanding their inner worth, and they have a firm confidence in their faith. In other respects they are without the least connection with the rest of the world; they did not even know that Jews lived in Europe likewise. — The day on which they received the sacred books is honoured by them as a festival day.

During my travels in Africa, I myself met with the above mentioned Polish Jew; he lives in Algiers, and his name is Sincha Rubinstein. From his own lips I received a confirmation of the statements I have given relative to

[1] Petachia p. 170, does not recognise the Jews in Tartary as real Jews; because they do not follow the Tamul customs.

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CHAPTER XXXI.

Meshed. — Kashan. — Yezd.

A desolate and sterile track of land of eighteen days' journey lies between Ispahan and Meshed. Here are to be found the ancient ruins of a tomb, to which the Jews used formerly to make pilgrimages, and which the inhabitants assert is the tomb of Abraham ben Ezra. It is known that this great and learned man travelled in the East; I believe, however, that this tradition about the tomb is false, although it may be the tomb of one of his relations who bore the same name.

A considerable number of fugitive Jews met me, and they related to me cause of their flight as follows: Before the death of the last Shah, about 1840 or 1842, the Mussulmans in Meshed suddenly attacked the Jews who dwelt there, who numbered nearly 400 families,[1] and insisted that they should embrace the Islam faith. The Jews refused, upon which many of them were murdered by the Persians; some of them saved themselves by flight, and escaped safely

[1] *Ritter's Erdkunde* Vol. 3, part 8, p. 103. The Jews of whom there are about 100 families in Meshed, are held in great contempt, says A. Conolly. They are not rich, but still wealthy, compared with their brethren in Ispahan and Teheran, who are only permitted to carry on the most disgusting trafic, like so many in Europe. In Meshed the Jews are not permitted to tread on holy places, nor to visit the Moslem baths; they must wear different caps from the true believers, and as a badge, must have a strip of cloth on their breast. They are not allowed to defend themselves by a single blow against a Mussulman, and are followed by the urchins in the street, who, before the eyes of their parents, pelt them with dirt and stones; for it is considered meritorious to frighten the soul of an infidel. In

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ful and sublime, to the East, where so many of our race languish in ignorance and misery. — I adress myself to all scientific and learned men with this request, and conclude with the words of Salomon: „Hope deferred maketh the heart sick.“[1] — „In all labour there is profit; but the talk of the lips tendeth only to penury.“[2]

CHAPTER XXVI.

The Jews in Persia.

Return to Bombay from Mascat by sea. — Perilous voyage. — Mascat.

In March 1850 I embarked on board an Arabian ship. The wind was strong, but favourable. Seventy persons from different countries were with me in the vessel, and we had every prospect of having a good voyage. — We knew not, however, the incapacity of our captain. On the third night after our departure, our steersman had gone to sleep, whereby the ship got considerably out of its right course, which infortunately was only remarked on the eighth day. Three days were spent in the most dreadful anxiety. I sent my servant and interpreter to the captain, in order to represent our situation to him. The captain received him with curses and threats, which only increased our alarm. At some distance from the ship we remarked something which looked to me like a flight of birds, and we began to indulge the hope that we were no longer far from land; but when we

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[1] Proverbs c. XIII. 12.
[2] Proverbs c. XIV. 23.

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It was on a Friday that we entered the town, and wished to rest there on Saturday. The caravan remained in the caravanserai outside the gates. I inquired for the Jewish quarter of the town, intending to proceed there; but I had scarcely shewn myself in the streets, when I was surrounded by a number of street boys and low rabble. My European dress excited displeasure, and I was pelted with stones amid abuse and cries of „Giaour" (dog). The least resistance would have brought me into still greater danger; so great is the hatred of Persians for strangers.[1]

The Nassi Mordecai received me very kindly, and my arrival was hailed by the community as an especially happy event.

The following day I put on my Jerusalem attire, and went into the streets. A caravan-companion, who happened to meet me, recognised me, and called out loudly: „This Giaour is a Jew." He immediately informed the Caravan-Baschi, as well as his fellow-travellers, of his discovery, who all exclaimed that I had contaminated them by my presence. On Saturday evening I entered the caravanserai quite innocently in my European dress. Hardly had I entered, when a tumult took place before the closed door, which was broken open, and I heard the cry: „Death to the Jew."

The Caravan-Baschi, who had shewn me much sympathy, threw hastily some Persian garments over me and concealed me in his harem, the door of which he closed. He then approached the enraged crowd, and asked: „Whom do you want? there is no Jew here; we had a Hakim-Baschi among us, but he has remained behind in the town, I know not where." The infuriated rabble gave little heed to this explanation, but surrounded the caravanserai and sought for me everywhere: the harem, however, as a sacred and in-

[1] Messechet Barachot chap. 9, v. 4, fol. 60, reminds one of the prayers which are spoken on entering and leaving a town. It appears as if formerly the same dangers threatened the Jews as at the present time.

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without distinction of faith, fell upon their knees, and commended themselves to God, whose awful power with mighty breath moves earth and sea. — This event took place on the eve of Easter-tide.

I finished my prayer, and felt more composed, and went down to throw myself upon my couch. The storm raged until midnight, when it gradually subsided. The next morning we all assembled on deck, full of joy at our deliverance from danger. But now hunger began to be felt in a still greater degree. — One of the passengers had accidentally ascertained that the captain possessed a small store of dates. We desired to have them, but were refused for good reasons: we were told that they were destined for the sailors, so that they might not lose their strength for want of food. We, however, were so tormented by hunger that we insisted on having our request complied with, and threatened the captain to complain against him to the European consul, if he would not give up the dates. We certainly allayed our hunger with them; but felt afterwards in consequence the most tormenting thirst. — Again the captain ascended the mast, and began his survey. „Land!“ he cried, and with joyful shouts was the cry repeated. We sailed towards the coast; with a favourable wind we steered round some ridges of rock, and on the twenty-second day of our voyage saw before us the gigantic mountain of Djebel Dahoudki, the same we had observed the previous evening, but which the captain had failed to recognise. With mixed feelings of joy and fear we saw some boats approaching us from the shore. A powerful voice called out to us: „Salem Aleikum!“ and with delight we all repeated the greeting. On the twenty-second day after our departure from Bombay we cast anchor, and were only six miles distant from Mascat, the goal of our journey.

We were saved, but fearfully exhausted. I immediately sent my servant to take my passport to the English consul, and to buy some provisions for me. An hour later, a boat with the English flag sailed up to us, in which were the

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The father of the reigning Shah was in the habit of personally visiting occasionally the Jewish quarter of the town, all the inhabitants of which came out to meet him, and white lambs were slaughtered in his honour, and the flesh divided among the poor.

A circumstance occurred which led to my being summoned before the council of the Shah, in order to give my opinion on a rather difficult case; — it was as follows: In Shiraz lived two brothers, both Rabbis, Mullah Ababi and Mullah Isaac, of whom the former for some cause became an apostate. He was considered one of the most learned Rabbis in Persia, and obtained access to the court of the Shah, where he used every means and artifice to establish himself in the favour of the monarch. By application of passages in the Bible, the principle of which did not accord with the notions of government, he oppressed his former fellow-believers, and then again offered them his services in order to extort money from them. Thus he drew their attention to a passage in Deuteronomy, where it is thus written: „Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of anything that is lent upon usury. Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury, but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury.“ [1]

In consequence of this, the Mullahs of Teheran, Mullah Rachmim, the Nassi Aga Ababi, and the first Jews of the town, were summoned before the highest authorities of the kingdom, and desired to explain this passage. They, however, said that they were not learned enough to be able to expound the text, adding, that in all Persia there was no Mullah who could answer this question; there was, however, a Chacham from Beth-el-Mikdass in Teheran, who would be able to explain it. By this, they meant me; and I, as well as several other Jews, received shortly after a message from the authorities, inviting me to appear before them. I immediately obeyed the summons, presenting on my entrance

[1] Deuteronomy c. XXIII. 19. 20.

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CHAPTER XXVII.

Journey from Mascat to Abeshur.

Jewish tribes in the desert of Arabia. — Bender Abassi. — Linsa. — Abeshur.

After a rest of 21 days, I embarked for Abeshur; but on the third day of the journey we were obliged to sail along the shore of Ormuzd. A violent gust of wind dashed our ship on some rocks, where it stranded. The water streamed into the ship, and a scene of dreadful terror and anxiety took place. Every one endeavoured to save himself, and sprang into the only boat we possessed. The little vessel was thus over-loaded and sank. Many saved themselves by swimming to the shore, but others were drowned. The goods and provisions were left in the ship.

Deprived of all our property and food, we lay upon the shore. Before us on one side the Persian Gulf, on the other the extensive desert. On the place where we struck formerly stood a town, of which now only the ruins remain. In the trenches between the rocks, we found rain-water enough to quench our thirst; but we suffered much from hunger. While the damaged ship was being repaired, we wandered about in the vicinity, seeking for food; but found nothing but some herbs and mushrooms, on which we lived for three days. In the meantime our ship was once more got afloat, and under the protection of Providence, in three days more, without further accident, we reached *Bender Abassi* where we remained several days, in order that our ship should be properly repaired.

A wide, fruitful tract of land extends from Bender to

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The palace of the Shah, the chief buildings, and th palaces of the Ambassadors of Russia and England oc cupy a particular portion of the town, which is separate from the rest by a moat, over which is a drawbridge, an in this manner it is protected from all disturbance. Th palace of the Shah is built in the Arabian style, and ha large and strong gates, reminding one of the entrance c our prisons. One of these gates is towards the town, an the other towards the palaces of the Ambassadors: bot lead into the fore-court of the palace of the Shah. O entering two large ante-rooms are to be seen, one of whic is the throne room. Twice a year the Shah comes here a the Bairam festival, in order to receive homage. Throug a screen of glass the true believers see their monarch. Th throne itself is hewn out of a block of marble, and is abou 15 feet in length and 10 in breadth; and it is supported b twelve marble statues of females, grouped at the fou corners. The throne is approached by several steps, and i ornamented with costly jewels, and wrought with great ar It is maintained that it has been used by all the Shahs c Persia. The crown room is closed the whole of the yea except on days of audience; but strangers are allowed t see it, and it was thus I obtained entrance there. In th second room, the portraits of all the monarchs of Persi are painted on the walls. In another apartment are said t be the portraits of all the oldest kings of the country; bu of this I can say nothing, as I did not see them.

The city of Teheran carries on a considerable trade Like all other important towns, the streets are paved, bu they look miserably desolate, as, according to Easter custom, no house has windows towards the street. Th shops, bazaars, and markets make a splendid impressior The population consists not only of Persians, but also c Jews and Christians.

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When our ship was again in a condition to sail, we continued our journey; and in two days landed at Abeshur. Here live about 70 Jewish families, who are less oppressed than those living in the interior of Persia. They owe this to the English consul, by whom I also was most kindly received, in consequence of a letter of recommendation which I presented to him. He gave me an introduction to his vice-consul at Shiraz, made arrangements himself with the Caravan-Baschi respecting my journey, and made him in writing responsible for my safety.

Abeshur lies on a projecting point of land in the Persian Gulf, and is surrounded by a half decayed wall. The town carries on an extensive trade, and twice a year the steamers from Bombay anchor here, to ship cargoes for the interior of Persia.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Journey through the desert to Shiraz.

For this journey I wore European clothes, but my servant wore the dress of the inhabitants of Kelbella. My safety was in the hands of the political authorities, and with confidence in God I began my journey. Our road led us through regions infested by hordes of robbers; but Providence protected us, although victory was often dearly bought.

During the journey I also was often exposed to personal danger, in which I owed my preservation to the Caravan-Baschi, who had pledged himself for my safety. — Every morning at daybreak I retired before the caravan proceeded on its way, in order to pray. This was remarked, and one day, when I was on the point of putting on my Tephilim (phylacteries) in preparation for prayer, I heard

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posite direction to the one taken by the other fugitives. Our two guards rushed after us, but we turned round, killed one, and made the other prisoner, and carried him with us to the caravan. There the combat had continued without any decision, and they were occupied in discussions, which finally resulted in an exchange of prisoners, and the payment of a very large ransom on our parts. After this was settled, at midnight, twelve hours from the commencement of the attack, we were able to continue our journey.

By this occurrence, the two Russians and myself gained much in the opinion of our fellow-travellers; as our prisoner had much lessened the difficulty of coming to terms with the robbers. On the following day also we were several times attacked by straggling parties of robbers, but our danger was but trifling. On the whole road there is no caravanserai established, and for shelter therefore we made use of some of the many caves which are to be found here.

In the train of the caravan we had a great number of mules, bearing in carefully-closed coffins the bodies of rich Persians, for the purpose (as has already been mentioned) of interment near the tomb of the founder of their sect in Meshed Ali. One evening we had taken shelter from the pelting rain in a cave, leaving the coffins at its entrance. Suddenly a mass of rock and a quantity of rubbish became loose, and rolling down from the top of the cave, blocked up the entrance. We considered ourselves as irrecoverably lost, but after a long and anxious search we discovered another outlet; the coffins however were buried in the rubbish.

After two days' journey farther on we arrived at a stream, which forms the boundary between Persia and Media. As there was neither boat nor bridge, by which it could be crossed, we were obliged to make up our minds to wade through it. Thence to Hamadan, the journey continued without any occurrence worthy of note.

Hamadan, the former summer-residence of the Persian Shah, is a town of great importance to the kingdom on

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loudly planning that, favoured by the coming night, they would kill us and take possession of our property. In order to prevent this new danger, the idea struck me of propitiating these two men by a bottle of brandy, the favorite beverage of many Persians. I took a bottle from my packhorse, and my servant offered it to them, asking them in broken Persian: „Will you drink of this Rukiuh?“ One of the robbers replied in Persian: „Why not? we will drink, and get courage for the execution of our plan.“ Upon this, they took the bottle, emptied it and for a time left us in peace. Suddenly we heard the tinkling of the bells on the leading-horse of our caravan. It was now high time to escape. We cried for help as loudly as we could, and the two bandits fled away at full speed.

The morning after this adventure we arrived at Shiraz, when I immediately proceeded to the English vice-consul, a Persian by birth, who received me in a very friendly manner, in consequence of the letter of introduction I had brought from his superior at Abeshur.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Shiraz. — Deplorable condition of the Jews.

Only about twenty years since, nearly 3000 Jews[1] lived in this once magnificent and flourishing city. By persecutions, oppressions, and odium of all kinds more than 2500 of them were compelled to go over to the Mussulman sect of Ali. Although outwardly apostate, a great number of these families still preserve in their hearts the faith of their fathers, and even find means of having their children

[1] Benjamin of Tudela p. 82 speaks of 10,000 Jews.

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When any calamity threatens the town, or when the Jewish community fears any approaching danger, lambs are sacrificed before the door of this house, and their flesh divided among the poor. One day I was told that such a sacrifice was about to be offered up, in order to turn aside some danger, which threatened one of the community. I endeavoured to make these superstitious misled people understand that, by such a proceeding, they only committed idolatry, and that our religion expressly forbade every sacrifice, with the exception of that offered in the Holy Temple at Jerusalem. I was happy enough to prevent the ceremony for this time, and to be the cause of the intended expenses being given to the poor.

The Persian Jews believe that Hamadan is the ancient town of Susa, as the tombs of Esther and Mordecai are found here. This, however, I do not believe. The former kings of Persia had their summer-residence in Hamadan, and their winter-residence in Susa (in Persian Sustar), which town is 15 days' journey from the former, and the climate is milder. The ruins of the buildings, which date from the reigns of the former kings, confirm this opinion.

Four days' journey from Hamadan lies Karmanshah, where reside about 40 Jewish families. The Mullah of this community, a very avaricious man, takes a most unworthy

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has two chambers, of which the one serves as ante-room to the other, and appears modern in comparison to the rest of the building. (Ritter further quotes the copies of the Hebrew inscriptions by Sir Gore Ousely and R. Porter, which, however, contradict each other). In the first chamber only lie old funeral-furniture, — such as lamps, biers &c. Through an opening, only $1\frac{1}{2}$ foot in height and breadth, one manages to creep into the second chamber, in which are two wooden stands shaped like sarcophagi. These are said to be the tombs of those celebrated persons.

I only found one apartment, in which, at a few steps from the entrance, is the tomb of Mordecai; and but a short space from this, rises from the ground an eminence of about one foot in height, and this is the tomb of Esther. The two tombs are not separated by a wall.

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should all certainly be lost!" — These words much affected me; I tried to console them and said: „Have patience, my brethren; and continue to put your confidence in God. Perhaps the monarchs of Europe, under whose protection your brethren live happily, may be able to alleviate your misfortunes, and may place noble rulers on the throne of Persia, who will loosen your bonds, and allow you freely and openly to avow your belief."

Another day the leader of the rebels came to the Nassi, in order to force on him a new tax. When he perceived me there, he asked who I was, to which the Nassi replied: „He is a Chacham from Beth-el-Mikdass." Hardly had the Persian heard this, when he addressed me in the following words: „I have been told that the Chachamim of that town are very learned, and understand in particular the art of making amulets; make one for me to protect me in war." — At first I wished to disclaim this honour, but my scruples vanished at the sight of his blood-stained yatagan (xymetar), and I promised to satisfy his wish on the following day. I set to work, but as I would not profane our sacred customs by this superstition, I turned over irresolutely the leaves of my Bible, and at length came upon the history of Esther. I took the names of the ten sons of Haman, by means of letters joined them into sentences, and in the form of cabalistic amulets wrote them on a square piece of parchment. This I gave to the Persian, — who expressed great joy on receiving it, — and I told him at the same time that the amulet would only be of use to him as long as he was courageous and brave. Two days later this Persian took part in a combat of the insurgents against the troops, in which the latter were worsted: he now believed firmly in the power of my amulet, brought me presents, and proclaimed that I was a man of God, because my amulet had been so effective. This little affair obtained for me no little consideration.

A few days later, the report was spread that the rebels were going to attack the Jews, who came to me, begging

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or a little piece of wood or splinter of bone with which they touch their fore-head. This custom appears to be in remembrance of former religious ceremonies, dating from the times of idolatry.

The superstitions of the East likewise exercise great power over the inhabitants of Persia; for they exorcise evil spirits. Not only the Mussulmans, but the Jews likewise indulge in this superstitious practice. For instance, every sick person is in their eyes possessed by an evil spirit, and exorcisms are the proper remedies to be employed to ensure recovery. This is done in the following manner: Seven dishes, filled with different kinds of food, are placed in the public bathing house, the doors of which are locked during the night. If, on the following morning, one of the seven dishes is found to have been touched, it is considered a proof that the evil spirits have accepted the food, left the sick person, and the patient will recover. Should the food, however, remain untouched, the sick person is considered incurable. — I thought it my duty to remonstrate with my brethren in the faith on this preposterous notion, on which they said in reply: „Who other than evil spirits could touch the food in a house so securely closed?“ — I answered laughing that perhaps a mouse might have eaten it. Although my opinions had much weight with them, yet it was not possible for me to deprive them entirely of this superstition.

Notwithstanding all this bigotry, the Persians, in general, are very well informed. They are a handsome, powerful, brave people, and of great stature. Their pride is immense, and their hostility without bounds against every stranger not belonging to their nation or their faith. They spit in his face, just as they have the dirty custom of spitting on the walls of their dwellings.

The dress of the men consists of a long upper-garment, without any collar, with long narrow sleeves; wide European trousers, and a garment (kaftan), which they call Antero, which reaches down to the feet fitting close to the

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desolate condition of the Jews, is the following. A rich Persian took a fancy to a Jewish girl, and sought her in the house of her parents. As, however, these visits became dangerous, he tried to persuade the girl to adopt the Mussulman faith, so that she might become his wife. „My parents would die of grief", said the Jewess, „if I forsook my religion." — „You hear it," said the Persian to his companions, „she will embrace the Islam faith." — Notwithstanding all her protestations he hurried to the Achund (Priest and Judge), and corroborated by his companions, stated to him that the maiden wished to embrace Islamism. The Achund immediately caused the girl, who had meanwhile been concealed, to be sought for at her parents house; the messengers treated the parents most cruelly, and their daughter was dragged before the Achund. At the end of two days the prescribed purifications were concluded, and the girl begged for permission to walk on the terrace in order to enjoy the evening air. This was allowed, and she threw herself down from the terrace and fractured her skull. The Persians, who knew the cause of this suicide heaped the most dreadful insults on the dead body, hacked it to pieces, and left it in the streets. Only during the night did the Jews venture to collect the remains, and bury them.

The town of Shiraz had formerly very beautiful plantations and buildings: mausoleums, colleges, bazaars, caravanserai, magnificent baths etc. It has been almost entirely destroyed by an earthquake. The vicinity is very fruitful, and produces costly wine. Tombaco also, — a plant which is smoked like tobacco through water pipes (Nargile) prepared expressly for the purpose — grows there of a superior quality, and better than in Ispahan.

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custom that, when a divorced couple wish to be reunited the wife must first marry another man, and then be divorced from him, before she is allowed to be united again to her first husband.

The apostacy of a Jew to the Mussulman religion is made the occasion of a public festival. After the convert has gone through the prescribed purifications, he is conducted, magnificently attired, into the mosque, where the Achund receives him, and bestows on him a new name. He is then placed on a horse richly caparisoned, and led in triumph with music round the town, on which occasion every one greets him, and presents him with gifts.

In the month of November or December in each year, the followers of the sect of Ali assemble daily during the whole month for two or three hours, in order to celebrate solemnly the anniversary of the death of the founder of their religion, whom they believe to have been killed by a Jew. For the last three days of this festival (Katel), songs of lamentation are chanted. If, during this time, a Jew ventured to show himself in the streets, he would be exposed to instant death.

The Christians in Persia live under a similar yoke as the Jews. The latter, however, enjoy greater freedom in trade. Neither Jews nor Christians are allowed to keep any slaves.

My fellow-worshippers in Persia have repeatedly entreated me to publish in Europe a description of their actual condition; I have promised to do this; and state it fully in the next chapter.

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sun, I had brought with me from Bombay a parasol, which was of beautiful workmanship, and this parasol was the cause of my life being twice endangered. One day, being tormented by the glare of the sun, I made use of this shelter; — suddenly a shot was heard and a bullet touched my mantle. I did not know that in Persia it was forbidden for a stranger to carry a parasol: it was a Persian who had fired at me. By this occurence the whole caravan was thrown into a state of confusion, and the Caravan-Baschi had much trouble to keep me from these new inconveniences.

Another Persian took a fancy to my parasol and begged I would sell it to him; and when I refused to do this, he swore in his anger that he would not only take the parasol but my life also. He concerted a plan with his companions to murder me during the night. Providence and my three grateful patients and friends, however, saved me; they had discovered the whole plot, and watched carefully over me. One evening one of them asked me to pitch my tent beside his, and, as I had a foreboding of the intentions of the Persians, I willingly complied with his request. In the middle of the night a man, armed with a dagger, crept up to me, but was suddenly seized by my friend. The man begged for mercy, and promised to desist from any furture attempt on me. He sought, however, several times the same night to come near me, but was prevented doing so by my three watchful friends.

I was thus richly rewarded for my medical assistance, and thought with gratitude of the vice-consul of Shiraz, to whose advice I owed the friendship of my brave protectors. From this same cause arose many other advantages, especially this, — that on the whole journey, the different tribes hastened to furnish me with provisions. — The continued watchfulness of my friends effectually preserved me from any further persecutions.

For four days we passed through a region filled with the ruins of whole cities: melancholy proofs of the devastating scourges of God, — plague and persecution. We had

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a double marriage, in order to spare the purchase money, and avoid the expenses of the outfit of the daughter.

When a marriage is celebrated, the bridegroom, several days before the wedding, arranges a feast for his friends. On the marriage day, he proceeds with them to his bride's house, where the Mullah bestows his priestly blessing upon the young couple. Afterwards, the husband, with his relations and friends, returns to his own dwelling; where again, accompanied by music, a feast is held according to the custom of the natives. About ten o'clock in the evening he proceeds with the wedding guests to the dwelling of the young wife; who is conducted by some of them from the parental roof, and, as soon as she appears on the threshold, she is surrounded by the relations of the husband. Accompanied by their relations and friends, and the whole train, the young man then repairs to his new home. — The men generally marry between the ages of 25 and 35, and the girls are generally from 20 to 22 years of age.

Once again I refer to the peculiar custom concerning the superstition mentioned in the former chapter, that every sick person is looked upon as possessed, and a cure is attempted in the manner already related. On my remonstrances with respect to this folly, I was told that this custom had been followed for a long time.[1]

Among the Persian Jews are some who are very rich, and this wealth is the source of so many dangers, that they are obliged to conceal their treasures like crimes. — I comprise their oppressions under the following heads:

1) Throughout Persia the Jews are obliged to live in a part of the town separated from the other inhabitants; for they are considered as unclean creatures, who bring contamination with their intercourse and presence.

2) They have no right to carry on trade in stuff goods.

3) Even in the streets of their own quarter of the town they are not allowed to keep any open shop. —

[1] Deuteronomy c. XVIII. 11.

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high position. I had the honour of being allowed several times to pay my respects to him, his brothers Joseph and Mordecai, and his father Aga Babi. This influential and noble man merits that I should present the reader with a short biographical sketch of him, which I obtained from the statements of some members of his family, and for the truth of which I can safely vouch.

About thirty years ago a poor Jewish jeweller, named Aga Babi, lived in Ispahan. He had three sons, of whom one, Jekutiel, distinguished himself as a dancer, and the great people of the city were so delighted with him, that in the dancer they forgot the Jew. At a large fête, which was given in the city in honour of the Shah, Jekutiel was engaged as a dancer, animated by the presence of the ruler to display the most extraordinary powers of his art, the young man had the boldness in one of his daring leaps to kiss the hand of the monarch, who, admiring his talents, kindly excused his temerity, and induced him to follow him to his court, although the father of Jekutiel endeavoured by prayers and remonstrances to keep him back.

The youth grew up under the eyes of his patron the monarch, and proved, by his fidelity and zeal, that he was worthy of the favour which had been shewn him. But even at court, surrounded by flattery and temptation, he never forgot his parentage or his low origin, and long remained faithful to the faith of his fathers. The son of the Shah, his friend and companion, whose amusements he shared, obliged him one day at a feast to partake of forbidden meat: from this time the favorite offered little resistance to the wishes of the prince, and soon afterwards embraced the Islam faith.

In a short time there was an outbreak at Meshed, to subdue which the Shah went in person with his army. In his company was his young friend and servant Jekutiel, who, after going over to Islamism, had taken the name of Ismael. The town of Meshed was besieged, but the rebels defended themselves obstinately, and in a sally put the army of the besiegers to flight. During this general flight

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and, if the complainant can bring forward two witnesses, the Jew is condemned to pay a heavy fine. Is he too poor to pay this penalty in money, he must pay it in his person. He is stripped to the waist, bound to a stake, and receives forty blows with a stick. Should the sufferer utter the least cry of pain during this proceeding, the blows already given are not counted, and the punishment is begun afresh.

12) In the same manner the Jewish children, when they get into a quarrel with those of the Mussulmans, are immediately led before the Achund, and punished with blows.

13) A Jew who travels in Persia is taxed in every inn and every caravanserai he enters. If he hesitates to satisfy any demands that may happen to be made on him, they fall upon him, and maltreat him until he yields to their terms.

14) If, as already mentioned, a Jew shows himself in the street during the three days of the Katel (feast of mourning for the death of the Persian founder of the religion of Ali) he is sure to be murdered.

15) Daily and hourly new suspicions are raised against the Jews, in order to obtain excuses for fresh extortions; the desire of gain is always the chief incitement to fanaticism.

These points give a clear insight into the wretched condition in which the Jews languish in a country where, not so very long since, a woman of their people was wife of the ruler, and one of her brethren was first minister.[1] The only compensation which they find for these persecutions, insults, and oppressions, is the great confidence which is reposed in them in commercial matters. Their integrity in trade is recognised by the Persians to such a degree that a Jew, who fails, finds refuge with the Achund against all prosecutions, and thus gains time to settle with his creditors.

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[1] Even Benjamin of Tudela p. 76 speaks of the oppression of the Jews in Persia. — Rabbi Petachia p. 176 describes these persecutions more minutely.

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high position. I had the honour of being allowed several times to pay my respects to him, his brothers Joseph and Mordecai, and his father Aga Babi. This influential and noble man merits that I should present the reader with a short biographical sketch of him, which I obtained from the statements of some members of his family, and for the truth of which I can safely vouch.

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fided to the paternal government of Your Imperial Highness, and, among the large population of the Great Ottoman Empire, he has endeavoured in person and on the spot to ascertain the social and religious condition of the last remnants of a nation, which, since the remotest antiquity, has been known by its misfortunes, its resignation under every trial, and its unshaken faith. His numerous researches, and his earnest investigations, relative to the fate of the ten tribes of Israel oblige him to make known the results of his labours, of his observations, and of his frequently perilous journies. For several years he lived the life of his fellow-believers, faithful subjects of Your Imperial Highness, and in honour and truth he must confess, that he often mingled his tears with theirs, for he had no power to bid them dry them. The only consolation which he was able to offer to his brethren, oppressed beneath a burden of misfortune, was the promise to raise the voice of truth in their behalf, and endeavour that this voice should reach Your Imperial Highness.

Providence has deigned to support my humble and unceasing efforts. Inspired by Providence, Your Imperial Highness condescended to promote the happiness of Your people by new legal regulations, which will powerfully contribute to create for my brethren in the faith a more equal and endurable social condition. But what length of time may still elapse before the benefits of the new law, which can but promote the prosperity of the Ottoman Empire, may pierce to those barren regions, far distant from the capital, and with which it has had until now such rare communications! — When will the day of justice and humanity dawn for my brethren, who, scattered in the mountainous and almost inaccessible regions of Kurdistan, live, as it were, a vegetable life on the extreme boundaries of the kingdom, chained to the earth in the most complete ignorance surrounded by Kurdish tribes, whose turbulent will knows no bounds, and whose rudeness, cruelty, and rapacity, keep the Israelites in a state of degrading abasement.

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especial event, however, kept him in his high position. During the change of succession, the town of Ispahan had revolted, and the young Shah determined to punish it by a demand of 100,000 tumauns. For the exaction of this sum he choose the minister Ismael, and promised that, if he fulfilled his duty, he would keep him in his place. In the city an Achund had arranged a new revolt against the emissaries of the Shah; but with a numerous army Ismael suppressed the rebellion, destroyed a portion of the city, chastised the rebels, and carried out succesfully his difficult commission. But in these events he had to mourn the death of his father and one of his brothers. The instigator of the rebellion escaped punishment by flight.

These events took place towards the end of the year 1850, shortly after the time I had left Ispahan and during the time I was at Teheran.

Ismael still lives at the court of Teheran, but no longer occupies his former high appointment. In the general esteem and respect which are paid him, he finds compensation for his fall, and still endeavours to alleviate the sufferings of his former brethren in the faith to the extent of his power. As already mentioned, I had the honour of becoming personally acquainted with the worthy man, and I owe to his kindness introductions to some influential men at Teheran, particularly to the Mullahs Ababi and Jacob, proprietors of a considerable business in jewelry.

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The petitions to the Emperor of the French and to t Queen of England are the same as the abvoe with the e ception of necessary alterations. The one to the Emper of the French bears the same date as that of the Sulta that to the Queen of England was dated and presented the 22nd February 1857.

The petition to the Sultan I sent through Mr. Lo Kaufmann, leather merchant at Galata in Constantinopl the one to the Emperor of the French I presented myself the Tuileries, and the one to the Queen of England I d livered at the office of the English Embassy at Paris.

The original of the above petition written in Frenc is as follows:

A Son Hautesse Impériale le Grand Sultan de la Sublime Porte Ottomane.

Sire!

Que Votre Hautesse daigne jeter un regard d'auguste compassion su le pli qu'un voyageur obscur, mais un des plus fidèles sujets de Votr Majesté, ose déposer aux pieds du plus magnanime, du plus équitabl des Princes, dont le règne sera béni par tant de nations.

Celui qui ose tracer ces mots s'est imposé la mission d'explorer le contrées que l'Éternel a confié au gouvernement paternel de Votre Hautess Impériale, et ce fut au milieu des populations nombreuses de votre em pire Ottoman qu'il s'efforçait de constater personnellement et sur le lieux mêmes l'état social et réligieux des derniers débris d'un peupl connu depuis la plus haute antiquité par ses désastres, comme par sa re signation à toute épreuve et par sa foi inébranlable; et ses recherche multipliées et ses investigations sérieuses sur le sort des dix tribus d'Israë lui font un devoir de faire connaître le résultat de ses labeurs, de se veilles et de ses excursions souvent périlleuses. Pendant plusieurs année il a vécu de la vie de ses coreligionnaires sujets fidèles de Votre Hautess Impériale, et pour rendre hommage à la vérité, il a souvent mêlé se larmes avec les leurs, car il n'avait pas la puissance de les sécher. L'uniqu consolation qu'il a pu offrir à ses confrères courbés sous le poids d malheur, ce fut ma promesse d'élever la voix de la vérité et de la fair parvenir à Votre Majesté Impériale.

La Providence elle-même a daigné seconder mes humbles et me constants efforts. Inspiré par elle Votre Hautesse Impériale daign assurer le bonheur de ses peuples par des nouvelles prescriptions légale qui contribueront puissamment à créer pour mes coreligionnaires un éta social normal, plus supportable. Mais combien de temps s'écoulera encor

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to Bagdad, while others were overtaken by their pursuers, and compelled to apostatise. Here as in all other places, notwithstanding their seeming apostacy, the enforced converts still remained in secret faithful to Mosaism. They agreed together to frequent the Mosques, but not to partake of forbidden meat. Every Friday the Shochet went from house to house to the new converts and performed his office. This complete separation gave rise to supicions. The Achund asked them if they were true believers in Islam. The Jews answered: „With body and soul.“ Then why do you not partake of meat?“ inquired the Achund. — „Because by abstinence we wish to atone for our former sin,“ was the reply. — At first this answer satisfied them; but those who were suspected were watched, and one Friday the Shochet was surprised in the performance of his office. The unhappy man was immediately hacked to pieces and thrown to the dogs; the other culprits murdered, the synagogues, which until then had been only sealed up, completely destroyed, and the Pentateuchs torn to fragments. It is true the Shah desired afterwards to know the cause of these acts of violence, but for the present the affair remained unnoticed; as from the frequent disturbances in this country, the commands of the ruler are not always recognised. After the death of the Shah, and the removal of the Minister Ismael, these atrocities remained unpunished.

Six days' journey from Ispahan is Kashan, celebrated for its silk manufactures. I saw there magnificent taleds (garments to be worn during divine service), and one of them I sent home. The Jewish community in Kashan numbers 180 families, who live in a state of dreadful oppression.

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their synagogue a portion of the homily is sung in Persian, the Old Testament is read in Hebrew. During prayer, they cover their head with white mantles, and turn towards Jerusalem during the time that the priest holds on high the roll of the Pentateuch. In their library they showed 50 copies of their Holy Scriptures; written on rolls of parchment by devotees, to which the signatures of the writers were affixed: each of these writings was kept by itself.

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CHAPTER XXXVI.

Concluding reflections.

In my childhood I had often heard of the ten tribes of Israel, who were said to have been banished to a dark, mountainous country, which was never cheered by the rays of the sun, or trodden by the foot of a stranger. It was said they had their own government there, and that under their own kings they rigidly adhered in these distant and unknown regions to the worship of Israel in the promised land. They were reputed to lead a marvellous life, whilst we, the descendants of the two banished tribes of Judah and Benjamin, were obliged to languish in exile under the yoke of fanaticism.

As I grew up, I devoted myself to the study of the Bible, and I learnt from Holy Writ that the other tribes of Israel had always been more corrupt than the tribes of Judah and Benjamin; and I said to myself: „God is just and merciful, why does He permit those to be happy who least deserve it?“ — From this moment I began to doubt the traditions of my people, especially as I could nowhere find in our holy books a satisfactory answer to this question, or obtain from them any explanation. The only alternative therefore, was to travel and make my own observations; and this idea occupied me continually.

When, in after years, this idea was acted on, I found the sought-for explanation, and was led to the following conclusions:

The fate which has befallen us, the children of Judah and Benjamin, is similar to that of the other tribes of Israel.

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violate apartment, remained undisturbed, and at last, cursing and swearing, the mob retired. When all was quiet, the Baschi conducted me to a trench near by, and advised me to wait in this place of concealment until the caravan should pass. With watchful ear and eye, fancying at the slightest noise that my pursuers were coming, I waited. At last at midnight the caravan, which was going to Teheran, approached, and I was released.

Five days' journey to the north-east of Kashan lies the town of Yezd, celebrated for the manufacture of wonderfully beautiful shawls. A Jewish community of 150 families dwell here, and they too languish under the yoke of the most ignominious oppression. I have not been able to visit this town myself, but from other fellow-believers, who have relations settled there, I have heard descriptions of their unhappy condition.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Teheran.

In the capital of Persia live about 500 Jewish families; they possess eight synagogues and have several Mullahs. Their social condition is also considerably better than those of the Jews in the provinces, which is chiefly caused by their living under the immediate control of the highest authorities in the land, and, at the seat of government. Perhaps another circumstance to which they owe better treatment is, that the father of the reigning Shah has a Jewess among his wives. Our fellow-believers occupy themselves mostly with trade, especially with the sale of pearls and precious stones; several of them are jewellers, lapidaries, and doctors.

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hovah (Shem); because Shemoth we take to be the swords with which our fathers fought against the enemy under Saul and David, and for all sacred forms of prayer there was only Criath-Shema. The cabalistic treatises, on the contrary, date from the time of the second Temple, and their form is in part the work of the latter great assemblies. How and whence then were the ten tribes able to obtain such an extraordinary knowledge? This is all the more inexplicable, since I myself found them so ignorant that they were not even able to read. True it is, however, that they were banished to these barren mountains, to these almost inaccessible regions. The distance is great, and the difficulties extreme to find them out; but they are still within the bounds of possibility. The river Sambathion — of which both the Jews in Asia and Africa speak — is said to drag in its course stones and pieces of rock, and to emit lava like a volcano, in order to prevent the approach and entrance of strangers to those parts; this I have not seen, but I have discovered the traces of the ten tribes of Israel.

At the present day, thanks to brave seamen and their voyages of discovery, we have gained accurate and certain knowledge of the remotest parts of the world. By the progress of education, geographical knowledge is universally extended, and by new discoveries the most distant parts are, in a manner brought near to us, so that the Antipodes are able to greet each other.

There must be many countries still unknown, even Alonzo da Ercilla says in his poems (vol. II, canto 27): The earth is covered with zones which are unknown to man; the field of discovery which is before us inexhaustible; and the sphere of our knowledge extends farther and farther towards the discovery of new truths.

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a certificate from the Russian Ambassador, with whom I had deposited my passport, and whose influence was very great, remarking that as an European, I could not subject myself to any foreign power without the consent of my Ambassador, but that I was ready to obey the order and considered it an honour to appear before that high assembly. When the passage alluded to was placed before me, and my interpretation of it desired, I declared openly that the exposition of the Mullah Ababi was false, adding, that in Europe, the youngest scholars, who were at all conversant with the Bible would understand how to give a better explanation of the text. My interpretation of the passage was as follows: „Thou shalt take no usury from thy brother whoever he may be!“ for the Bible says: „Take thou no usury of him or increase: but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee,“ [1] and further it says: „Unto a stranger thou mayest give interest, but thou shalt not lend upon usury.“ — The assembly received this exposition with satisfaction. I then remarked that in Europe it was the custom to draw up a protocol in writing respecting such discussions; to which they replied that the whole affair was not worth the trouble. The whole discussion, which lasted about half an hour, was interpreted by the dragoman Mullah Jacob. When the meeting was dissolved, I was asked if I knew the Baron von Rothschild; they had heard that there was a family in Europe of that name which were very rich and much esteemed by all European monarchs. If this family were really so powerful, why did they not come to the relief of their fellow-believers? — I answered that I only knew personally the Baron von Rothschild, who, in the year 1845, lived in Vienna. Besides, in Europe it was not known in what a wretched condition our brethren lived here: for there their lot was a much better one. — With this, the meeting broke up.

[1] Leviticus c. XXV. 36.

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The learned men, and particularly those who come from the Holy Land or from Europe, are treated with the greatest veneration, with even more than is shewn to their own scholars. In the flowery language of the East, they say that they are crowns, which have come to ornament their heads.

He, who is not acquainted with Oriental customs, can hardly form an idea of the consideration with which a traveller is there received and treated. As soon as he has been introduced to the Nassi, all hasten to show him every possible honour which his rank may demand. All his wants are anticipated; lodging, food, raiment, in short all that he may need is given to him, without the smallest compensation being required in return. Feasts and entertainments are arranged in his honour, as long as he remains in any place. And not only during his stay among them is this attention paid to him, but on leaving, it is extended to him in a still greater degree. As soon as the guest prepares for departure, the master of the house considers it as his first duty to furnish him everything necessary for the journey. The days are counted as to how long he will be on the way until he arrives at another place, and his provisions are arranged accordingly, so that he may want for nothing. Care is taken that he may be able to join a caravan, the expenses are paid, and not one of his brethren in the faith would fail to present him with some useful gift, the nature of which is always regulated by his rank.

But it is not only to their own people that the Jews of the East grant such a generous reception. Every traveller, every tourist, of whatever religion he may be, everywhere receives from them the same assistance and protection, every possible information he may require as to the manner and difficulties of his journey, the providing of guides or any other help. This generous hospitality is extended to every one without exception, notwithstanding the numerous travellers who pass through the East; it is considered as a sacred duty, and carried out in a truly patriarchal manner.

If a caravan is attacked, and a traveller falls into cap-

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CHAPTER XXXIII.

Hamadan.

After a three months' stay in the chief town Teheran, where I had several unpleasant affairs with the above-mentioned apostate, — which, however, were not attended with any bad results for me, — I began my journey to Hamadan.

The road thither is through a wilderness, partly broken by high hills, and relieved by thick bushes and dwarf trees. The journey occupies 12 days.

By the advice of the Russian consul, I assumed the Russian national costume; for Russia exercises in this country an almost magical power. Two Russians travelled by the same caravan, and I joined them. On the fourth day of our journey we got separated: suddenly a great disturbance took place, and we heard the sound of firing. All ran to arms; but, unfortunately, we were already surrounded by a band of robbers, and taken prisoners. These Arameam bandits (descendants of the Chaldeans) charged ten of their people to conduct us into the mountains, while the remainder continued the combat against the caravan. They first led us to a plain, which was not far from the scene of action. The Persians who were made prisoners with us, took advantage of a favourable moment, when our guards were at a little distance from each other, and escaped, and joined the caravan. Eight of our guards pursued them, and the two Russians and I were left alone with two bandits. They had not even taken the time and trouble to disarm us. On an agreed signal, we suddenly started off, taking the op-

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Both these quotations show forth in the brightest col
the national virtues of the *Eastern* Jews, and these vi
remain unchanged even to the present day.

Finally I add a few more customs practised by
brethren in the East:

1) After the performance of divine service in the s
gogue, two persons stand at the entrance holding rose
some sweet smelling fruit in their hands, and these t
offer to each passer-by, who, before touching them, ut
the appropriate blessing.

2) When one Israelite visits another, at the entra
of the house, before leaving, he is sprinkled with r
water, and likewise receives enough of the same to w
his face, beard, and hands.

3) The morning salutation is the same as with us; a
mid-day one is greeted with the words: „Peace be w
you!“ To several persons together, one says: „God
with you!“ to which they answer: „God bless you!“

4) An Israelite, who travels with a caravan, does
put on his Taleth, or his phylacteries (garments for praye
but every morning and evening he reads Criath-Shema
portion of the Pentateuch which treats of the unity of t
Godhead).

5) Those Jews living in the mountains of Kurdistan
not wear Zizith *(Schaufäden)* the whole day as we do, l
only in the synagogue.

6) Divorces are conducted as with us, but with resp
to betrothals, this difference exists, that every father m
receive for his daughter up to her twelfth year the coin
betrothal. This circumstance often causes much that
disagreeable; for later should the husband not please t
young wife, she can refuse to remain with him, and is
lowed by law to leave him without a letter of divorce.

7) Sometimes marriages are celebrated by proxy;
sending to the bride by a messenger the coin of betroth
but at the marriage it must be given again by the hand
the bridegroom.

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account of its trade. The Jewish community, which consists of about 500 families,[1] have three synagogues and three Mullahs. The Nassi of the community is Mullah Eliahu. The second Mullah, of the name of Aaron, a man advanced in years, had once an old wall thrown down, and found two urns, one of which was filled with gold and the other with silver coins. On making inquiry concerning it, I was told that this circumstance was not of rare occurrence. This reminded me of a passage in Medrash Rabba by Rabbi Simon, son of Jochaias (book 3, chap. 17) and in the Jalkot (book 3, chap. 5) to be compared with the words of Moses.[2] What is mentioned in these passages on the concealment of money, prevails in the East up to the present day.

Within the walls, near the extreme end of the town, stands a beautiful large building containing an apartment lined with polished Delft-ware. There are here two tombs, separated from each other only by a small passage; and above them are covered catafalques. The inscriptions are in Hebrew letters, but only two names can be deciphered: on the one to the left the name of Esther, and on the other that of Mordecai. The building is the property of the Jewish community, and the keys are in their possession. At the commencement of each month, and at the Purim festival, pilgrimages are made to these tombs, and the book of Esther is read there. When, during the reading, certain passages occur, in which these two personages are particularly mentioned, all those present knock loudly on the catafalques, as if to say: „Here they rest, the preserves of our fathers; here they rest, and we read to-day their glorious history."[3]

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1 Benjamin of Tudela p. 61 speaks of 50,000 Jews, he likewise mentions the tombs of Esther and Mordecai, of which we make mention farther on.

2 Leviticus c. XIV. 34. 40. 45.

3 *Ritter's Erdkunde*, book 3, vol. 9, West-Asia, p. 124 & 125, says of these tombs: Near the Mosque is a space with tombs, among which is said to be that of Esther and Mordecai. It is built of brick, and

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passing through, as well as to guard the frontiers of the country from the frequent invasions of the nomadic hordes from Babylon. These public guards are, however, more to be feared than the robbers; for they themselves attack the caravans.

For instance, the village of Solata on the extreme boundary of the country is a regular nest of bandits. Surrounded by all these dangers I was indebted to a former fellow-believer, the chief military doctor of the province, J. Beer, for friendly advice and much kindness. At his suggestion I assumed the garb of a priest. He then introduced me to the commander in chief of the guards, who, at my request, gave other letters of introduction to the several under-officers on the route I should travel. By these means, my journey was without danger, as I was brought under safe protection to the frontier. Without any further disasters I reached Bagdad. There I had the misfortune to break my leg by a fall from a horse, and was obliged to remain there for twenty-one days, until I recovered.

On Wednesday, the 12th of Jar (14th of April) 1851 I left Bagdad in order to return to Constantinople. I had joined a caravan which took the road through the desert, — a journey which is calculated to last about fifty days: I gave myself out again for a physician. The caravan numbered 200 well armed men, and on leaving, we were joined by another company of 250, and later by another of 100 persons; so that we were now about 600 strong.

After being harrassed by continual attacks from the many hordes of robbers through whose territories we passed, on the 27th of Jar (29th of April) we arrived at Kirkuk, where we joined company with an other caravan of 600 persons, and now continued our journey 1200 strong. Up to the 8th Sivan (June) we had to endure slight skirmishes almost daily, but without any important loss; and on this day we joined a third caravan of 800 persons, and were now superior in numbers to any band of robbers we might meet, and were thus able to continue our journey with a

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advantage of the superstition of the Persians by making for them amulets and talismans. I represented this very plainly to him, but only seemed to displease him.

The town is fortified and very large, and carries on a considerable trade. Very costly carpets are made here. Large morasses and a long chain of mountains surround the town.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Persia, its culture, customs, and habits. Return to Bagdad.

Persia is one of the richest and most fertile countries on the Globe. It produces all that is necessary for the wants of the inhabitants, and the cheapness of all its productions, as well as of general living, is almost incredible. Industry flourishes, and the trade is extensive and renowned. Numerous caravans pass through the country, and magnificent tissues, carpets, shawls &c. are made here, the splendor and beauty of which are everywhere admired. I have seen costly pearls and precious stones, diamonds, rubies, and emeralds, here in more abundance than in any other country in the world. They form the chief articles of trade, which is principally in the hands of the Jews.

The present inhabitants of the ancient cities of Cyrus are divided into three classes: Mussulmans, Armenians, and Jews. The first belong, as already mentioned, to the sect of Ali. Even the other Mahomedans must give place before the grandeur and power of this Prophet. I remarked that the followers of this sect, while reciting their prayers on their knees, at the same time make use of a small stone,

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Departure for Africa.

Urged by a desire for repose after the fatigues and hardships of such long and difficult journies, I determined to remain for a time at Rumelia, which plan, however, I was unable to carry out.

After having collected the remains of my property, I travelled through Servia and Hungary and came to Vienna, passed through Austria, a great part of Italy, and arrived at Rome. Thence I proceeded to Livorno, embarked for Marseille, went on to Cartesan in Spain, and thence to Oran in Algeria. From Oran I travelled by sea over the whole north coast of Africa as far as Tripolis, and returned by land.

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advantage of the superstition of the Persians by making for them amulets and talismans. I represented this very plainly to him, but only seemed to displease him.

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lodged. The Italian Synagogue is in another street; it i a simple house, one story high. The African communit is now building a new Synagogue near the town, a very larg and magnificent edifice, and they assert that this identica spot was likewise inhabited by Jews centuries ago. Th Synagogue is placed in a wonderfully beautiful garden, — the most beautiful perhaps in Alexandria or even in th whole of Egypt, — planted with palms, dates, pomegranates ethrock (the fruit of Hadar), and many of the most rare an beautiful flowers.

Of the condition and occupations of the Jews in Egyp I will speak later, and will now only mention a peculia custom, which appeared to me very remarkable. — I Alexandria, in the house of an African Jew of some impor tance, whom I once visited on the Sabbath, I found in room a large stuffed divan, over which one single large co verlet was spread. Under this one coverlet sleep in peace ful harmony the several married members of the family with their wives, each pair occupying a different corner o the divan, — the father and mother, the grown up son with his wife, the daughter and her husband &c. — On my smiling and inquiring if such a peculiar and objectionable custom was general, I received an answer in the affirmative — During my stay in Alexandria, I lodged with a banker Chaim Musero, who lived quite in the European style, and whose house was also arranged in the European fashion.

The town itself, its flourishing trade, its beautiful European style of building, its broad streets and markets, a well as the magnificent plantations surrounding it, are al so generally known that I should not like to venture a de scription of them.

From Alexandria I proceeded by an Arabian ship t the village of Mackmadia on the Nile, situated at a day' journey from Alexandria, and connected with it by a canal. Near Mackmadia the canal is closed by two large gates; all ships coming from Alexandria are un laden before these gates, and their cargoes placed in othe

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body, and open at the sides. The covering for the head is a high sheepskin cap. They wear their beards long, and dyed red; while their hair, which is shaved off on the top of the head, hangs down on each side of the temples.

The women wear a garment of silk or linen, reaching down to the waist, and open in front; immensely wide trousers finish the dress. They ornament their necks, hands, and feet with jewels, and when they go out, they wear a white veil. The Jewish inhabitants of Persia dress in the same fashion with the exception that the women are obliged to wear black veils instead of white ones when they appear in public. The Persian women are very industrious and clever; each has her own work, and it is by the women that those wonderful shawls and embroideries are made.

The Persians know nothing of tobaco, but both men and women smoke tombaco. They drink a great deal of tea, and in eating use their fingers. The interior of their houses is ornamented with carpets and mirrors.

In every town is to be found a building surrounded by a wall in which is a tomb of some disciple or relation of Ali. These buildings form a place of refuge to every one who has to fear the arm of justice; for all who have succeeded in reaching one of them are safe under public protection.[1] The Jews and Christians enjoy the privileges in the house of the Achund which is likewise an asylum for the guilty and persecuted. They are there received, and kept in safety. — The judges alone have the right and power to cause any one to be taken from one court of justice to another. If an accused is declared not guilty, he is perfectly free, and enjoys the fullest protection; if, however he is condemned to imprisonment, he remains at the public place of refuge until the time of his punishment has expired, or until the death of the Achund, after which he is perfectly at liberty.

Among the Persian Mussulmans exists the peculiar

[1] Number c. XXXV. 11. 25.

went by another ship, as I wished to see something of vicinity and its inhabitants. From Buluck to Cairo i distance of an hour's journey through beautiful gardens; landscape is intersected by many canals for the purpos irrigation. The inundations of the Nile are celebrated b festival. The inhabitants arrange parties of pleasure on water; the sounds of merry music are heard, and joy rei around; for a fruitful prosperous year is expected, because th for want of rain, it is the Nile alone that irrigates the s

In Cairo also there are two Jewish communities; African, and one Italian. The first numbers about 6000 milies, and the latter from 200 to 250 families.[1] In the y 1846 the two communities sent for a Chacham, Eliahu Isr from Jerusalem, as their Chacham had died. The new C cham had two wives, as had also my host with whor lodged in Cairo, Mailum Moses Mosero, a money-chang and the father of my former host in Alexandria. The t communities together have eight synagogues, of which on called the Synagogue of Rambam (Maimonides). It conta several apartments for the reception of travellers. T town is large and thickly populated; but the streets narrow and very dirty, although, on account of the inte heat, they are besprinkled with water three times a day

From Cairo to Ancient-Cairo, which the Jews call M sar-al-Atik, is about an hour's journey. Many ruins are be found on this road, and the town of Ancient-Cairo its is also nearly a ruin. Only a few poor Arabs live the and ten Jewish families, likewise very poor, and suppor by their richer brethren in Cairo. There are two Sy gogues in the place, of which the first, Al-Karkujan, is fal into ruins, but the second, Al-Shamjan, although a very cient building, is still in good condition. Some of the Je call the latter Synagogue Kenesseth-Eliahu, and assert t Elijah once appeared there. It is supported inside by twe marble columns, and has two sacred arks of the covena

[1] Benjamin of Tudela, p. 98, speaks of 2000 Jews.

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CHAPTER XXXV.

The condition of the Jews in Persia.

All Jews in Persia declare unanimously that they are descendants of the first exiles from the kingdom of Israel. Although a small number belonging to the tribes of Judah and Benjamin are to be found among them, it is still without doubt that the greater number of them descend from the ten tribes.[1] A remarkable proof of this is, — that they possess no Talmud. They date from the time of the first Temple, from the first centuries of the dispersion of the Jews. Although they are able to read and pray in Hebrew, and some Mullahs (from Hamadan and Yezd) possess copies of the Talmud, together with the Shulchan Aruch, and prayer-books, still they have only had these books within the last few years from Bagdad.

The women exist in a smaller number in Persia than in other countries of Asia; they are also more respected. There are a great many unmarried men; for when a young man wishes to marry, he must purchase his wife by offering to her father a certain sum, and these expenses often exceed the means of the young people. Very peculiar marriages often originate in consequence of this circumstance. If, for instance, two fathers, each having a son and daughter, decide on a union between the two families, they arrange

[1] *Ritter's Erdkunde* book 3, vol. 9, West-Asia, p. 42, agrees with this assertion.

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chest in the handwriting of Ezra. A traveller from Western countries bribed the attendant, took out the Pentateuch, and went away with it. But when he was at sea, he was shipwrecked and drowned, and the Pentateuch was lost with him: the attendant died in the same year." The author of the Shem Hagdolim adds that when he was in Ancient-Cairo he was likewise told about this Pentateuch; but when he went into the Synagogue they would not show it to him, and the Chachamim of the town had told him in confidence that the above account was correct, and that in the ark of the covenant there was now only an empty chest. I found afterwards in the first volume of the Shem Hagdolim at the same letter *(ä)* as in the second volume, a passage where the author mentions that later in the five books of Moses, printed at Amsterdam with the commentaries Chinach and Dewed Tow, he had found in the part Waichi a remark of Rabbi Menachem Halevi, which asserts that the Rambam (Maimonides) had copied the five book of Moses from the Pentateuch in Ancient-Mizraim, and that this Pentateuch had been brought at the time of the Talmudists from Jerusalem to Ancient-Mizraim. Later the Rambam heard that in Burgundy there was really a Pentateuch written by the hand of Ezra, upon which he went there and examined it, and found that the Parshiot, Pituchot, and Sithumoth quite accorded with those copied by himself in Ancient-Mizraim. The date of this fact was the 28th of Sivan (Jar, May). — Thus the whole tradition of this Pentateuch and its authorship by Ezra is false; but I had obtained the desired explanation, and was glad that I had considered the whole affair from the beginning as a fable.

Without the city of Ancient-Cairo is shewn a Synagogue, which is asserted to have been the house of prayer of Moses, and the Jews call the building after his name.[1] This tradition may possibly be true, as in Exodus IX. 29 we read, that Moses said to King Pharaoh: „As soon as I

[1] Benjamin of Tudela, p. 102, likewise speaks of this Synagogue.

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They may only sell there spices and drugs, or carry on the trade of a jeweller, in which they have attained great perfection.

4) Under the pretext of their being unclean, they are treated with the greatest severity, and should they enter a street, inhabited by Mussulmans, they are pelted by the boys and mob with stones and dirt.

5) For the same reason they are forbidden to go out when it rains; for it is said the rain would wash dirt off them, which would sully the feet of the Mussulmans.

6) If a Jew is recognised as such in the streets, he is subjected to the greatest insults. The passers by-spit in his face, and sometimes beat him so unmercifully, that he falls to the ground, and is obliged to be carried home.

7) If a Persian kills a Jew, and the family of the deceased can bring forward two Mussulmans as witnesses to the fact, the murderer is punished by a fine of 12 tumauns (600 piastres); but if two such witnesses cannot be produced, the crime remains unpunished, even though it has been publicly committed, and is well known.

8) The flesh of the animals slaughtered according to Hebrew custom, but as Trefe declared, must not be sold to any Mussulmans. The slaughterers are compelled to bury the meat, for even the Christians do not venture to buy it, fearing the mockery and insult of the Persians.

9) If a Jew enters a shop to buy anything, he is forbidden to inspect the goods, but must stand at a respectful distance and ask the price. Should his hand incautiously touch the goods, he must take them at any price the seller chooses to ask for them.

10) Sometimes the Persians intrude into the dwellings of the Jews and take possession of whatever pleases them. Should the owner make the least opposition in defence of his property, he incurs the danger of atoning for it with his life.

11) Upon the least dispute between a Jew and a Persian, the former is immediately dragged before the Achund,

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tive and generous to strangers. I remarked in the Synagogue that their intonation in the reading of the portion for the week is quite different from that of the German and Portuguese Jews; but it was good, and had a particularly edifying impression.

The houses are handsome, and richly ornamented inside, but they have no windows: light comes from the terrace above. — The rich live almost completely in the European style; and as already mentioned, many young chickens and pigeons, which are uncommonly cheap, are eaten here.

On account of the heat, the water for drinking is very flat; and in order to make it cool and drinkable, they use cooling vessels made out of a kind of bluish earth; these vessels are filled over night, and placed upon the terraces.

From Cairo I embarked for Damietta; the journey lasted eight days on account of the water being low, at high tide it can be accomplished in four days.

The Jews assert that Damietta is Caphtorim mentioned in the Bible. The Targum translates it into Kaputkai, and by this name it is designated by the Talmudists.[1]

In Damietta dwell 50 Jewish families;[2] they have a Synagogue, but no Chacham, only a slaughterer.

Our brethren there are chiefly occupied in the sale of red fezes, dates, tobacco, cotton, silk, and other productions. In this city are the Consuls of the European powers.

Between Cairo and Damietta several scattered Jewish communities are to be found in some of the towns, but they have fallen into such a state of ignorance, as to be unable to repeat a Hebrew prayer. Even the slaughterer cannot read his Dinim (instructions) in the Hebrew language, but he has them in Arabic.

Six hours' journey down the Nile from Damietta is the village of Esba; here the ships wait for a favourable wind,

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[1] Genesis c. X. 14.

[2] Benjamin of Tudela speaks of 200 Jews.

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The Jewish doctors are likewise much sought after, and exercise great influence over the first people of the kingdom, which they nobly turn to the advantage of their oppressed brethren. Thus are fulfilled the sublime words of the scriptures when it is written: „And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their ennemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my convenant with them: for I am the Lord their God.“ [1]

The Christians in Persia are nearly as much oppressed as the Jews. Some time since they addressed themselves to the Pope with a prayer for protection, but this appeal was of no avail.

After my return from Africa, and after I had published in Paris in the year 1858 my travels under the title of *„Cinq ans de voyage en Orient de 1846—1851,“* I turned to the fulfilment of the request made to me, and addressed a petition to the Sultan, the Emperor of the French, and the Queen of England, imploring protection for my unhappy brethren in the faith in Persia.

The memorial to the Sultan is as follows:

To His Imperial Highness the Grand-Sultan of the Sublime Ottoman Porte.

Sire!

May Your Imperial Highness condescend to look with gracious compassion on this page, which an obscure traveller, but one of the most faithful subjects of Your Majesty, ventures to lay at the feet of the most just and magnanimous of Princes, whose reign will be blessed by so many nations.

The undersigned, who has traced these lines, has imposed on himself the task of exploring the countries con-

[1] Leviticus c. XXVI. 44.

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he is by the Jews and Christians. He is the partner another rich merchant named Moses (Arabic Misani), carries on considerable commercial transactions with Sud He imports goods from France and Italy, and the Ar from Sudan come to him with caravans bringing him d and ivory, for which they receive European articles in change. These Arabs repose such perfect confidence him, that they almost exclusively do business with h and if they do any business with others, they certai always desire beforehand to have his opinion and vice. He is about forty years of age, has a handso wife and two sons, of whom the eldest, Eliahu, is fifte and the youngest, Isaac, twelve years of age. He has two sons instructed by European teachers in the Arab Hebrew, and Italian languages. He has likewise t daughters, of whom the elder, Asisa, is ten, and the oth three years old. His mother, who still lives, is high respected in his house. His dwelling, which stands in open space, is charmingly situated: he lives quite in t European style, though the house is arranged according the customs of the country. He is at the same time ve religious, and never goes to his business without having fi studied two hours with the young Chachamim, of who there are several in the town. Every Saturday all the Ch chamim assemble in his house, and the whole night spent in studying the Talmud and sacred history. F the space of two months I lodged with this hospitable a learned man, and I have made the above remarks acknowledgement of his great kindness.

In the town there were several other respected a well-informed men, whom I likewise feel myself obliged mention: Rabbi Joseph Chalifi, broker to the French Cons a very rich man, who also held literary meetings eve Saturday; and a third, Rabbi Chaim Sirusi, who had sever Chachamim studying in his house, and a beautiful Jeshiw This last Rabbi has two wives.

The community has an especial overseer, Rabbi Jac

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The paternal heart of Your Imperial Highness was filled with the gracious, compassionate endeavour to promote the happiness of Your faithful subjects. We place our hope on the firm and all powerful will of Your Imperial Highness, and on the supreme justice of the Eternal, who has protected Your Majesty in all Your undertakings, and Who makes all those to prosper who walk in the path of righteousness for the good of humanity.

After having traced a faithful picture of the condition of his brethren in the faith before the promulgation of the Hati-Houmajum, after having visited the kingdom of Persia, where the unheard of debasement and oppression of the Israelites for centuries remind one of the ancient Egyptian bondage and Babylonian persecution, the undersigned author has compiled an account thereof in the work which he has the extreme honour of laying at the feet of the most human and glorious of Sultans.

Some shades in this faithful picture are gloomy; they deserve to be known and appreciated according to their real value. (Kurdistan, p. 61, 64—66; Persia, p. 160, 226.)

The undersigned author speaks only in his own name; he fulfils a heartfelt duty and a sacred promise in raising his supplicating voice in behalf of so many human beings, whose eyes are unceasingly turned towards the august dwelling of Your Imperial Highness, towards the greatest of Sultans, who, admired by the world, represents upon Earth that Providence, which inspires and guides him.

If the humble pilgrim, who soon again will resume his wanderings and continue his researches, should have the unutterable happiness of attracting the gracious notice of Your Majesty on the precarious condition of his brethren in Kurdistan, his highest wishes will be gratified. His words are too weak for the proper expression of all his feelings; he is only able to lift up his prayers to the Most High, Who sees all, and may He grant to Your Imperial Highness continual happiness.

Paris, June 12th 1856. **J. J. Benjamin II.**

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in different ways. To this is added a long garment, and a wide shawl hanging from the head, thrown gracefully round the upper part of the body. They wear slippers but no stockings, their hands and feet are decked with gold and silver rings, the nails painted red and the eyebrows black.

Many streets are inhabited almost entirely by Jews although they have the privilege of fixing their residence in any part they like. Several families of Italian Jews are to be found among them, but they do not form any especial community of themselves. — Among others is a family of the name of Selva, who has immigrated from Spain, where they were formerly Christians. Our fellow-worshippers live free and happily at Tripoli; they carry on a considerable trade, and are mostly very rich. Many of them hold Government appointments in the Custom-House. Respecting their usages and habits at births, marriages and deaths, I shall speak in conclusion when I name those of all the other African Jews; for their customs are the same throughout.

The climate of Tripoli is very bad; and the inhabitants suffer particularly from severe diseases of the eye. Almost a fifth part of the whole population suffer in this way, and nearly a tenth part are completely blind, so that I never saw so many blind persons as in this place. This disease however seems to confine itself only to the natives, for the Europeans are not affected by it, and can bear the climate better.

At the east and west of the town of Tripoli are several villages which have likewise some Jewish inhabitants. Two hours' journey to the east is the village of Amrus; here there are 50 Jewish families, who have a synagogue and a slaughterer. Two hours' journey farther on is the village of Tisuri, which contains 70 Jewish families. In these two villages and their vicinity there are some remarkably beautiful palmwoods and vineyards. A drink called Lagwi (palm-wine) is extracted from these palm trees; it is sweet, and has a pleasant flavour, but intoxicates very easily; it is sold for 1 piastre the occa. It is prepared in the following way:

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avant que les bienfaits de la nouvelle loi, qui ne peuvent que faire prospérer l'empire Ottoman, pénétreront dans quelques contrées incultes et éloignées de la métropole, avec quelle elles n'ont pu avoir jusqu'à présent que des communications assez rares. Quand luira le jour de justice et d'humanité pour mes confrères dispersés dans les contrées montagneuses et inaccessibles pour ainsi dire du Kourdistan, où sur les confins extrêmes de l'Empire ils végètent dispersés, attachés au sol, dans l'ignorance la plus complète de leur existence, entourés par des tribus Kourdes, dont l'indépendance turbulente ne connaît pas souvent de frein, et dont la rudesse, l'âpreté et l'esprit de rapines retiennent les Israëlites dans un état dégradant d'abaissement. Le coeur paternel de Votre Majesté Impériale fut touché d'une auguste compassion pour faire le bonheur de ses fidèles sujets; nous espérons dans la ferme ét tout puissante volonté de Votre Hautesse Impériale ainsi que dans la suprême justice de l'Éternel, qui a protégé Votre Majesté dans toutes Ses entreprises et qui fait prospérer tous ceux qui marchent dans la voie du bien pour l'humanité.

Après avoir tracé un tableau fidèle de l'état de ses coreligionnaires avant la promulgation du Hati-Houmajoum, après avoir visité l'empire Perse, où l'abaissement et l'oppression des Israëlites sont inouïs et séculaires, où ils rappellent l'antique servitude de l'Égypte et les persécutions de Babylon, l'auteur soussigné en a fait un récit contenu dans l'ouvrage qu'il a l'insigne honneur de déposer aux pieds du plus humain et du plus glorieux des Sultans.

Quelques traits dans ce tableau véridique sont sombres; ils méritent d'être connus et appréciés à leur juste valeur (Kourdistan, p. 61, 64—66, la Perse, p. 160 et 226).

L'auteur soussigné ne parle qu'en son nom. Il accomplit un devoir de coeur et il remplit une sainte promesse en élevant sa voix suppliante en faveur de tant d'hommes qui tournent sans cesse leurs regards vers la demeure auguste de Votre Hautesse Impériale; vers le plus grand des Sultans admiré par l'Univers et qui remplace sur cette terre la Providence qui l'inspire et qui le guide.

Si l'humble pélerin, qui reprendra incessamment son bâton de voyageur pour continuer ses explorations, avait l'insigne bonheur d'attirer le regard auguste de Votre Majesté sur le sort précaire de ses confrères du Kourdistan, il serait au comble de ses voeux. Ses paroles sont trop faibles pour exprimer convenablement tout ce qu'il en ressentirait; il ne peut qu'élever ses prières vers l'Unique Maître, qui voit tout, et qui daignera accorder à Votre Hautesse Impériale un bonheur constant.

Paris, le 12 Juin 1856.

J. J. Benjamin II.

farther on, through deserts and over mountains is the villag of Djebel, extending along two sides of a mountain: henc its name. The inhabitants of this place occupy themselve entirely in agriculture and cattle breeding. There are 10 Jewish families here, whose Nassi is Isaac Medina. In on part of the village stands a synagogue called Grebe, t which pilgrimages are made. The Arabs consider this syna gogue sacred, and relate fabulous wonders concerning it; hence it is that all this synagogue contains is perfectly safe from pillage. — An hour's journey from here is a small castle called Birs-al-Askar, in which about 1000 men are stationed, in order to suppress any turbulent movement which might be made. — A journey of a day and a half farther on, through a very flat country in which graze numerous flocks of sheep, brings one to the village of Ghurian, where 120 Jewish families reside, whose Nassi is called Chomani. This village is employed in agricultural pursuits and in the breeding of cattle; many figtrees also are found here. — Two hours' journey from thence is the village of Beneabbas. In these two last mentioned villages the inhabitants have the extraordinary custom of building their houses in the ground, which have the advantage of being agreeably cool in summer and warm in winter.

In all the above mentioned villages the houses are most wretched. In the apartments, mats of palm twigs are spread over the bare floor, and upon these the inhabitants repose; carpets are nowhere to be seen. Their dress is dirty; it consists of a fez bound round with a kerchief, a garment reaching to the knees, and trousers of the same length. They continue to wear the same articles of clothing until they drop into rags; on Saturday, however, they change their linen. They put on a burnon when they go out. The women wear a long robe ornamented with silver coins and medals, and a fez the same as the men. They wrap a woollen

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shawl round their head and the upper part of their body; their feet are ornamented with rings, and are bare like those of the men. Their holiday attire is but seldom washed, their every day clothes *never*; it can easily therefore be imagined that they are very dirty.

I took a suitable opportunity to make inquiries of some of my fellow-worshippers, how it was that so little importance was attached to either cleanliness of person or of dress; for besides the disagreeable impression their uncleanliness made on every one, they were moreover acting against the law, as the Bible in several places gives directions respecting the cleansing and washing of apparel. In answer to this, I was told that it was caused by fear of the Arabs, who, if they saw them different would imagine they were rich, and plunder them daily. This excuse seemed plausible.

For two hours early in the morning the women are occupied in grinding the corn, from which they afterwards make bread: one may generally hear them singing at their task. It struck me particularly that the beds of these people were in a remarkably good condition. Their food is very bad; two of their dishes, which are considered delicacies, but which would disgust an European, are the following: Zu-meta and Busi. The first is thus prepared: barley is dried until it is almost scorched, after which it is ground, the flour sifted and mixed with ground carroway seeds. Some water is then poured over this mixture, it is pressed and kneaded in the hand until it becomes dough, and this is eaten with raw onions. They drink water with it, and the dish is much relished. *Busi* is prepared in the following way: water is boiled, and salt and wheat flour poured into it; this is well stirred together, until it becomes a thick, hard dough, which is put into a large dish; a greasy sauce is then made and poured over it. The whole family then seat themselves round the dish, and, as knives and forks are not known, each plunges his hand into the dish, tears off a portion of the dough, dips it several times into the greasy

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sauce, and then eats it. The whole proceeding was so disgusting to me, that I really could not look at it, and these two delicacies of the country are enjoyed alike by Jews and Christians, sick and healthy. From this, some idea can be formed of the discomforts a traveller in these countries has to endure.

Besides agricultural pursuits and the breeding of cattle, the cultivation of the wine and the planting of dates, palms, and pomegranates are the principal employments of the Jews in these villages. They likewise employ themselves in weaving, and make woollen covers for sale, blacksmiths and locksmiths are also to be found among them, and makers of peculiar brushes used in dressing woollen cloths. Jews in bad circumstances are very seldom to be found here; many of them are very wealthy, and almost all can obtain a livelihood; for as the Arabs themselves pay no attention to trade, they purchase all they require of the Jews. Those who live near the sea carry on likewise a wine and corn trade. — Although Government permits them perfect freedom, they still suffer much from the fanaticism of the Arabs.

Besides the above mentioned villages, there are others still in which Jews reside; but as I have not seen them, I can say nothing of them.

All the Jews of these villages are under the superintendance of the Chachamim of Tripoli, for all the surrounding neighbourhood belongs to the Pachalik of that town.

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CHAPTER XL.

III. Tunis.

From Tripoli, Tunis can be reached by land as well as by water. I chose the latter mode of travelling, as the journey by land is very dangerous, and at the end of September 1853, I embarked in an Arab ship going to Zerbi. With a favourable wind the voyage lasts from two to three days, but we were surprised by a sudden storm, so that for the space of eight days we were beaten to and fro, and at length driven back to Tripoli, where, close to the harbour, our ship was dashed to pieces. The passengers, however, were saved. I remained there during the festival days, and then embarked for the second time, and after a passage of two days arrived safely at Zerbi.

Before entering the town, a quarantine of ten days has to be performed, for which purpose a large building has been erected close to the sea, and in that dirty house the ten days appear to pass to the traveller like ten years.

The town of Zerbi is divided into two parts, of which one is on the coast. In this part are situated the manufactories &c. and business is carried on. The best Taleths to be found in Turkey are made at this place. In this portion of the town live also the European Consuls and the rich Mahomedans. Half an hour's journey from here, and separated from it by a tract of sand, is the other part of Zerbi, and in this part reside the Jewish inhabitants, numbering about five hundred families. They

have several Chachamim, of whom the first Rabbi is called Salomo Matuk, and the second Rabbi, Nisim Semama: the Chachamim are not paid by the community, for they themselves are rich manufacturers. The place has two synagogues, both tolerably large; one of them is attented by Cohanim (priests) only, and is therefore called the Priests' Synagogue. In no town are so many priests to be found as here; they form nearly a third part of the community. The Jews are very religious and well instructed in the Talmud; forming a contrast to those living in Tripoli, who are rather ignorant. Their trade flourishes, and they likewise many of them possess large manufactories, in which Taleths, turbans, woollen and cotton stuffs are prepared. They likewise occupy themselves with cultivating the soil and the wine. Their commercial intercourse is directed particularly towards Malta, and many Europeans likewise come to Tunis for business transactions. Their dwellings are tolerable, but their food is bad; barley bread is eaten, and it is only when a stranger visits a house that wheaten bread is baked in his honour.

Numerous scorpions are found in Zerbi, and many deaths are yearly caused by the sting of these dreadful animals.

The men dress according to the fashion of Tunis, with only the difference that they wear no stockings, but only red shoes. The women dress according to the same fashion, and when they go abroad they wrap themselves in a large woollen shawl, so that nothing can be seen of the face. They also wear neither shoes nor stockings; and if one of them were to do it, she would be thought a woman of no character, who wished to make herself remarkable. The houses are built in the most simple manner possible, of street dirt and stones; inside and outside daubed with lime or chalk. Every one is his own architect, and builds according to his own taste, but it can only be done in winter, as, otherwise, he would be in want of the greatest requisite — street dirt — which is only to be had at that time of the year when the rain falls. A heavy rain penetrates into these slightly

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Before quitting the East, the cradle of mankind, the land of mystery, and before taking leave of my brethren in the faith scattered there, who have been groaning for centuries under the yoke of barbarous and despotic nations, I will add here a few general remarks respecting travelling in these countries.

An European traveller, accustomed to cultivated countries, to intercourse with civilised people and to the conveniences of life, will, on entering the East, feel as if he had been transplanted into quite another world, into a world which it exceeds my power to describe. At every step he is surrounded by dangers, hardships, and privations of every kind, which increase the farther he goes. But a Jewish traveller finds himself placed in very different circumstances. The kindness, the confidence, the love and attention with which he is everywhere received in these countries by his brethren in the faith, make him forget the many sufferings and hardships of his journey. All kinds of privileges are allowed him, and the respect which is shewn him amounts almost to general veneration.

Above all, it was the pious faith of my brethren, their careful observance of our forms of worship, even to the most minute particulars, and their veneration for it, which made the deepest impression on me. Their piety is indeed well fitted to edify an European Jew, the remembrance of it forms an encouragement for the future, and it was indeed difficult for me to bid farewell to these faithful brethren. Two points deserve especial mention; they are these: the learning and the benevolence, the mode of life and traditional hospitality of my brethren in the East.

If the scholars of the East distinguish themselves in general by a deeper and more thorough knowledge, it is caused chiefly by their dwelling at the fountain head of all human wisdom: in their researches they have ever the sacred springs before their eyes, and thereby become animated by an unshaken faith; so that in this latter case even those, who are less wellread, may serve as examples to others.

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the breeding of cattle, particularly of sheep and camels. In the year 1853 the rain did here also much damage.

Half an hour's journey from Cabes is a little place called Sara, in which dwell about 50 Jewish families, who employ themselves in the same manner as those living in Cabes. The ruler of the place lives at Tunis, and only comes to this neighbourhood for three months in the summer. With him come the receiver of taxes for the Government of Tunis, Cadi Nathan Shemana, with his son Salomo, and they collect the tributes. The tax-receiver, who has a military escort with him, pitches his tent about an hour's distance from this place, and thither the Arabs of the whole locality repair to pay their dues. In this place there are many warm mineral springs, but they are not used by the inhabitants of the country, their valuable properties not being known: I have bathed in them several times, and experienced their invigorating effects.

I have still to mention a few more places which I have not visited myself, but have heard described. Three days' journey from Cabes lies, in the desert, a tract of country called Isrit, and by the Jews called Crez Hatmarim (country of dates); here likewise grow many palms. There are several towns in this little country. The first is Gaffa, two days' journey farther on is Tozer, again one day's journey farther on Nefta, and another day's journey still farther Gamar, where meet the boundaries of Tunis and Algeria. Jews live in all these places, and have a Chacham in common, named Rabbi Salomo Bursil, a very learned and good man. The Jewish inhabitants, as well as the native Arabs occupy themselves in agricultural pursuits, the breeding of cattle, and the cultivation of dates and palms; but few carry on any trade. — These statements I have heard verbally from natives.

From Cabes to Sfax one can travel by land or water; both ways are, however, very unsafe; the former on account of the Bedouins, and the latter owing to the great ignorance of the captains of the ships. I prefered the voyage by sea,

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tivity, he may, on this misfortune being known, surely reckon that they will not delay to liberate him: the ransom is collected for him, and this often amounts to a considerable sum.

From this one may judge how easy and convenient travelling through the East may be made, easier than in other countries, notwithstanding the difficulties of the journey, and the many dangers to which travellers are exposed. As the East is the fountain head of sacred knowledge, how earnestly do I advise my learned and enterprising brethren to draw from this holy source. For the light of knowledge which they would there diffuse and promulgate, they would find a reception worthy of them, and a comfortable life.

But travelling in the East is made considerably easier for the Jews than for others, by one great advantage, which they alone possess. This is a knowledge of the Hebrew language. It is a powerful bond, the sole mysterious means which enables them to enter everywhere, and to overcome every difficulty. Among these numerous tribes, where so many different languages are written and spoken, the Jewish traveller is sure of finding in every place at least some persons to whom he can make himself understood, and on whose assertions he can place the most implicit reliance.

It can be unhesitatingly asserted, that the characteristic habits and customs followed by the Jews of the East in the present day are those mentioned in the Bible as being peculiar to the ten tribes; whilst the habits and customs of the European Jews resemble those of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. I refer, in conclusion, to two passages in the Bible, which seem to bear upon this; the first of which proves the hospitality of the ten tribes in contrast to the tribe of Benjamin.[1] The second passage reminds one of the generosity of the ten tribes towards their hostile brethren.[2]

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[1] Judges c. XIX. 14—22.

[2] II. Chronicles c. XXVIII. 8—16.

Jews of the vicinity assert that this is the spot mentioned in Psalm LX, 2, and say that Joab ben Zeroja came up to this spot with his army, as the Psalm relates. I asked for some proofs of this assertion; upon which my travelling companion, Chacham Saul, explained to me that about an hour's distance from here was a village called Elgemme, where the caravans halt, and here there was a large, ancient, stone building with a Hebrew inscription, the purport of which was as follows: „Ad Khan Higia Joab ben Zeroja" (that is to say: „Up to this place came Joab the son of Zeruiah"). I was incredulous, and replied that anybody might have written that inscription, but to this he remarked that the inscription was in ancient characters. — I had become so full of curiosity, that the time appeared too long before I came to the place where I could make my own researches. Immediately on my arrival in the village in question, I hired an Arab, to whom I gave 2 rajals (6 piastres), to act as guide and show me everything worth seeing; my travelling companion accompanied me. We arrived at the ancient building. It is round, in the middle of it is a large court-yard, which I ascertained to be about 320 feet long, and the same in breadth. The portal of the door is about 30 feet high, and 16 wide. The building itself has five stories, and is about 120 feet in height. In each story are 60 chambers, with a window in each. The breadth of the rooms with the two side walls is about 60 feet. Under the rooms of the first story are large caves, which are entered from the interior, and among them is one which extends as far as Mehedia, a distance of 12 hours' journey. The stones of the building are enormously large and thick. The upper story is nearly in ruins, as the Arabs have broken away the stones to build their own houses. On the outside of the second story, on the northern side, is the inscription. I clambered through the window on to a stone in the wall which somewhat projected, and my Arab guide held me firm from the inside of the room, while I read the inscription. My travelling companion remained in the room, and I called

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8) If a man dies without leaving children, the brother of the deceased marries the widow.

9) If any one wishes to have two wives, he must give satisfactory reasons for it; for instance, that by the first wife he has no children, or only girls. Those, who are not Jews, can marry two wives without giving any such reason.

10) Many who marry a second wife, pledge themselves only to give her food, but no clothing, these she must provide herself.

11) If a man stops in some place for any length of time, he engages for himself a wife during the period of his stay; but does not take her away with him.

12) Little chickens are eaten which are not yet fledged. The inhabitants of those parts know much better than we do what birds and fishes it is permitted to eat.

13) After midnight, a singer comes into the courtyard of the Nassi on the Sabbath and festival nights, and sings until break of day. This is also the case when a stranger, whom they wish to honour, is staying among them.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Return to Constantinople.

I had seen enough of the East to obtain a knowledge of the country and its inhabitants, and above all else to obtain an insight into the condition of the Jews dwelling there, and I hastened now to quit this land of prejudice and oppression.

Ten days' journey led me through a desert country and over rocky hills. Solitary guard houses are placed along the road, in order to protect the traffic and the caravans

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and son-in-law to the Cadi at Tunis, Josef Semana. The superintendent of the Italian community is Rabbi Jehuda Halevi of Gibraltar. Each community has a synagogue; that of the Africans is a large old stone building, that of the Italians a small house, one story high. For the most part our brethren here are very well instructed; they speak Arabic and Italian. Their dwellings and food are tolerably good, and they are generally rich and some even wealthy. They carry on a flourishing trade in wool, and a still greater one in olive oil, which is exported in great quantities. Many Christians live also in this town, and they are engaged in similar branches of trade. Both Jews and Christians enjoy every privilege under this Government.

Two days' journey from here is the town of Nabal, a dirty place, completely surrounded by mountains. Here dwell about 100 Jewish families. Their Chacham and Nassi Rabbi Chay Algez, is chiefly with the Bey in Tunis; he is a very clever man, and endeavours to foretell the future by algebraic calculations, and he has a decided believer in the Bey. The community has one synagogue. But few Jews here are engaged in trade; they mostly devote themselves to agricultural pursuits. They speak Arabic.

A journey of one day from hence brings one to Hammamet (bath). There are most beautiful baths and lovely plantations in this place, and I spent several days here to refresh myself. Half a day's journey from this delightful spot is Tunis.

Near the town of Tunis are still to be seen the ruins of the ancient city of Hannibal, the rival of Rome.

In Tunis there dwell about 15,000 Jews belonging to the African, and about 1000 belonging to the Italian community. The African community has nine Dajanim, of which the first is the already named Jeshua Basis. He is a clever and learned man, and has still a very sharp eye notwithstanding his 80 years. He is rich and benevolent, and fills his office without any emolument. The second Rabbi, Nathan Bursil, is nearly as old as his colleague; he

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8) If a man dies without leaving children, the brother of the deceased marries the widow.

9) If any one wishes to have two wives, he must give satisfactory reasons for it; for instance, that by the first wife he has no children, or only girls. Those, who are not Jews, can marry two wives without giving any such reason.

10) Many who marry a second wife, pledge themselves only to give her food, but no clothing, these she must provide herself.

11) If a man stops in some place for any length of time, he engages for himself a wife during the period of his stay; but does not take her away with him.

12) Little chickens are eaten which are not yet fledged. The inhabitants of those parts know much better than we do what birds and fishes it is permitted to eat.

13) After midnight, a singer comes into the courtyard of the Nassi on the Sabbath and festival nights, and sings until break of day. This is also the case when a stranger, whom they wish to honour, is staying among them.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Return to Constantinople.

I had seen enough of the East to obtain a knowledge of the country and its inhabitants, and above all else to obtain an insight into the condition of the Jews dwelling there, and I hastened now to quit this land of prejudice and oppression.

Ten days' journey led me through a desert country and over rocky hills. Solitary guard houses are placed along the road, in order to protect the traffic and the caravans

and their mode of life is good. They mostly reside together in one particular quarter of the town, although they are permitted to dwell elsewhere if they like. The Jewish quarter is called Chara; it has gates which are closed every evening at 10 o' clock, and opened every morning at 5 o' clock.

The town of Tunis is very dirty, and even after a slight rain, the mud is over one's shoes. It is surrounded by a wall and by a boggy ditch, which, in summer, diffuses a particularly offensive smell. The neighbourhood is exceedingly fruitful. The gardens round the town are beautiful, planted with the most splendid fruit trees and tropical plants, and ornamented with fountains &c. In these gardens are built charming country houses, many of which belong to our brethren.

The men wear wide cloth trousers, stockings, and shoes, an embroidered vest, and over this a burnon. They shave their heads; the unmarried men wear a small black cap, and the married ones a turban with a black fez. The women wear a folded garment and wide trousers of silk or satin, which are quite tight from the knee, and ornamented with rich embroideries of gold and silver. Over all this they put on a kind of silk tunic, without sleeves, reaching as far as the knee, composed generally of two different coloured kinds of stuff. They cover their head with a fez, round which is wound a silk kerchief, with the ends hanging down. They likewise wear stockings and shoes. Upon their trousers, in particular, great extravagance is lavished; and I was told that they often cost the rich from 400 to 500 reals. The married women wear round their waist a kind of girdle. In the street they wrap themselves in a wide silk or fine woollen shawl; but leave their face uncovered, and hold up their garments as high as the knee, in order to display the embroidery on their trousers. They are generally very beautiful, rather stout, and in their beauty resemble their sisters in Bagdad; except that the women in that town are more noble looking and graceful, while the ladies of Tunis are more corpulent. The

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feeling of greater security. Notwithstanding our great numbers, we were, however, attacked the very next day, and were at first obliged to retreat with a loss of ten dead and fifteen wounded; but on the following day we overpowered the bandits, pursued them, and took from them 35 camels and 200 sheep.

On the 9th of Sivan (19th of June), three days' journey from Karput, we found an enormously large serpent called by the Arabs Al-Hasse-Kalil, lying in the middle of the road. We killed it, and I should have much liked to take the skin of the gigantic reptile with me, if my fellow-travellers had not opposed it. On the same day we also met a lion, which we scared away.

From Karput, privations and attacks began to trouble us in even a greater degree. Thus on the 9th of Tamus (9th of July) we were again attacked, and the combat lasted for three days and three nights. From the 14th to the 20th Tamus we continued our journey unmolested. On the latter day we were, however, suddenly assailed by a double force; a fierce and bloody struggle took place, in the course of which the caravan was blown up and pillaged. When night approached, I took shelter to save myself in a palm tree, and the next day I joined some of my companions. I had the good fortune to find again one of my camels, so that I was not quite deprived of all I possessed, and with it, I was lucky enough to save several objects which had been confided to my care. Three days after this circumstance we arrived at Sivas, whence I proceeded by another caravan to the harbour-town of Samsun on the Blak Sea. Thence I embarked for Constantinople, where I arrived on the 10th of Aw (8th of August), after a voyage of 36 hours.

End of the Oriental journey.

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evil one is united to the patient. After this mad ceremony the sick person *must* recover. If she does not, it is believed that the devil despises her, and gives her up. In many cases a recovery really does take place, occasioned probably by the rapid circulation of the blood and the profuse perspiration caused by these mental and bodily exertions. If the woman recovers, she wears later, at the pretended order of the devil, a party-coloured tunic. They go so far in this nonsense as even to attribute a certain religion to the evil one and call him either a Mahomedan, Jew, or Christian.

The greater part of the women suffer from this insane idea, but they carefully and rigidly conceal these ceremonies from the eyes of the men. Notwithstanding this, I sought for and once found an opportunity of witnessing such an affair myself. In Tunis there lived a Jewish tailor from Poland, who had a native woman for his wife. On visiting him one day, I found him most depressed. On inquiring the cause of this, he told me his wife was ill, and that he must solemnize the devil's ceremony with her, and for this he had no money. I scolded him, and asked him how he, as a native European, could permit or countenance such folly? To this he answered that he was compelled to do so on account of her family, otherwise they would suppose he wished to kill his wife. After reflecting a little, I advised him to let the ceremony take place, and that we should conceal ourselves, and take part in it as witnesses. He should allow the women to be in peace until their wild dancing began, and then suddenly appear among them. The man followed my advice, but armed himself with a stick and appearing at the right moment upon the dancing women, he began to lay about with it. With shrieks the company separated, and in the most remarkable costumes, some scarcely half dressed, they rushed out of the house. He then gave some hard blows to his wife, laid her on her bed, and left her. My advice proved good, for in the space of two days the woman had perfectly recovered, and was never again tormented by the evil one.

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CHAPTER XXXVIII.

JOURNIES IN AFRICA.

Habits, customs and condition of the Jews.

I. Egypt.

I begin the account of my African travels with Alexandria in Egypt, as I have already mentioned this place in my first journey.

Although there are many and great wonders in Egypt, I pass over them here, as the land of pyramids has often been described by learned travellers, and is sufficiently well known in scientific and geographical points of view; here I speak only of my brethren in the faith.

Two Jewish communities exist in Alexandria, of which one is formed by natives, the other by Italians. The African community consists of about 500 families, the Italian of about 150 families.[1] Both, however, are superintended by the same Chacham. His name is Rabbi Salomo Chasan, a native of Zephat, a rich and learned man, who stands in high repute not only with our people, but likewise with the Viceroy and the Consuls of the European powers. Each community has its own synagogue; that of the African is a large ancient stone building, and beside it stand several other buildings, in which Jewish travellers are received and

[1] Benjamin of Tudela, p. 107, speaks of 3000 Jews in Alexandria.

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and then to drink it. I did what she asked, with the exception of the last item; whereupon the old witch foretold great success to her charms. She then took seven different kinds of pulse, wheat, maize, peas &c., and seven kinds of green stuff, put all together into a pot, poured water into it, and placed the pot on the fire. The mixture soon began to boil and bubble, and this bubbling forms the asserted spirit-voices, which, of course, are only intelligible to witches. The sorceress then began to tell me out of the bubbling pot the most wonderful things about my present, past and future, and Heaven knows what else besides. When she had finished, I told her that it was all false, and that in Europe such things were much better understood. The woman, full of curiosity, asked me to tell her then how it was managed there. I told her no pot was needed for that purpose, but that she would hear a distinct voice, and *feel* the charm. I then took my stick, fought about with it in the air with loud mutterings, and then let it descend upon her with some good hard blows. Screaming and swearing she ran out of the house, and I threw her sorcery-pot after her. The people, in whose house this had taken place, were seized with terror, and did not even venture to touch the pot, or to go near the place where it fell. I myself was obliged to clear away the fragments and contents, in order to prove there was nothing to fear. When they saw this, and found that at the end of three days no bad consequences ensued, they promised me to give up their belief in all witchcraft, by means of which money was continually being extorted from them.

One day's journey to the west of Tunis lies the town of *Bunsard* on the sea; nearly 150 Jewish families reside here, among whom are a great number of Italian Jews. They have one synagogue, and their Chacham is called Rabbi Salomo. They carry on a flourishing trade, and the commercial people among them are very rich, and at the same

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one placed over the other. Over the upper one is an inscription in square Hebrew characters, which, however, has become defaced by time and almost illegible. This ark of the covenant is carefully locked, and no one is permitted to go up and open it. I requested the attendant to allow me to do so in order to see what the chest contained; but he refused my request, and told me that he had now held his office for 20 years, but had never himself once gone up, as it was believed that he who did so would die in the same year. He further told me that this chest contained manuscripts written by the renowned Ezra, and that the chest was thus kept carefully closed to protect them from injury. When I heard this, I urged my request the more, but, nothwithstanding all my pleadings and entreaties, I could not succeed in obtaining permission to see the contents of the chest. When I found this, I remarked laughing that doubtless the whole affair was but a fable, invented by some Chacham in order to act upon the credulity of the people: whereupon they called me a reformer, who would not believe in miracles.[1]

As the matter, however, deeply interested me, I made researches and inquiries concerning it, sought in many books for some account of the Pentateuch, but was not able to learn or find out anything about it. At last in 1854, when I was at Tlemsan in Algeria, lodging in the house of a certain Moses Sarbeth, a learned and rich man, who possessed an extensive library, I happened, accidentally one sleepless night, to take up some books in order to study, and in the second part of the Shem Hagdolim at the letter Ajin *(ä)* I found as follows: In the year 5248 Rabbi Obadiah of Bartanura was in Cairo; having left that place for Jerusalem, he wrote a letter to his father, in which he speaks thus: „I was in Ancient-Mizraim, and went into the synagogue of Elijah, where was a Pentateuch kept in a

[1] Benjamin of Tudela, p. 98, likewise mentions these two Synagogues, but he does not, however, speak of the Pentateuch.

this last town, a road of eight days' journey in length through the desert leads to the above mentioned date country *Isrit*. — Another road from *Rukaf* leads in four days journey through the desert to *Bona* (Arabic Anabi). Jews live in all these places, and although they are affluent, they are for the most part ignorant. From Bunsard I returned to Tunis, and went by steam boat to Bona; we were a day and a half on the way. On the frontier between Tunis and Algeria there is a little village in the African territory where there are considerable coral fisheries.

CHAPTER XLI.

IV. Algeria.

On entering Bona, it seemed to me as if I had entered paradise after a sojourn in hell. The sight of a town built in the European style, and of civilised men was truly refreshing. One great discomfort, however, the Europeans have to endure here, and that is the fever, which, although not of a dangerous kind, rages among them.

In the town live about 150 Jewish families, whose Chacham, a native of Morocco, is a man of no great learning. The community has a very large ancient synagogue called Grebe, in which, on the north wall, the place of the ark of the covenant is formed by a small room to which one ascends by several steps: in this room are the Pentateuchs. This little room has a particularly sacred character. One day I remarked several Mussulman women enter it, seat themselves for some time on the floor, and, after having offered a gift, retire. I asked the cause of this; for it seemed to

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am gone out of the city, I will spread abroad my hands unto the Lord."

Several other ancient and interesting remains are to be found here; for instance, a small palace built of different kinds of stone, which belonged to Joseph; only the upper part of which is decayed. This building is surrounded by a wall, and called by the Arabs Beth-el-Joseph; and from the terrace there is a fine extensive view as far as the desert.

Near this building is a very deep pit, to which there is a descent of 570 steps, hewn out of the earth. It is called by the Arabs Bir-al-Joseph (Joseph's pit), and they assert it is the dungeon into which Joseph was thrown by Potiphar. Two Arab girls with lights accompany those travellers who wish to examine the place, and for this they charge one piastre. Down in the pit is to be found a very fresh clear spring of water, and likewise a catafalque, in which rest, they say, the remains of a servant of Joseph, buried there by order of his master. It was in former times often the case that travellers visiting this pit were murdered and robbed by the Arabs; but this is now prevented by means taken by the authorities for public safety.

The dress of the Egyptian Jews resembles that worn by the Jews in Turkey. Many wear white turbans, and they often dress with great splendour. The women are also attired like those of Turkey; their headdress alone differs from that of the Turkish Jewesses, for they wear a red fez, the tassel of which consists of long single silken threads, hanging down to the feet. At the end of each thread is fastened a silver or some other coin, whereby this headdress is made very heavy. I once had such a fez in my hand, and I should reckon its weight to have been about ten pounds. The long tassels with the coins attached to them cause quite a ringing sound when the women appear in the street. The general language in speaking and writing is Arabic, but many also speak Italian. All are very atten-

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Africans, and most of the Jews. There are about 1000 Jewish families in the town, and they possess three synagogues. Besides having a native Chacham, Rabbi Isaac Tuwiana, the community is superintended by a chief Rabbi, Rabbi Ephraim Netter, appointed by the French Government. The president of the community is Rabbi Salomo Narboni; he is a descendant of the banished Spanish Jewish families, about 70 years old, and very rich. The Jews carry on a considerable trade with the neighbouring Arab towns and villages, and for the most part are very wealthy.

Among the natives, Jews as well as Mussulmans and Christians, exists also a superstitious custom when any illness occurs; for here it is likewise believed, that, if any one is ill, he is pursued by an evil spirit. In order to appease and banish this spirit, a black cock is killed, and with its blood the chest and crown of the head, the eyebrows, and hands of the patient are besmeared. The cock is then cooked, and afterwards thrown into some well outside the town as an offering to the evil spirit. It is firmly believed that after this the patient will certainly recover.

At a distance of two days' journey, south east of Constantine, is *Batna*, one day's journey farther on *Biskera*, a day and a half farther is *Cidagua*, and one day's journey from there is *Ginge*. Near the latter place is the boundary between Algeria and Tunis, and from thence one reaches Isrit. Little Jewish communities dwell in all these places, but there is nothing worthy of note to say concerning them.

One and a half days' journey north west of Constantine is the town of *Setif*, which has only been recently built. About 100 Jewish families, who have come from Cabyla, have settled here. Their president is David, a son-in-law of Narboni in Constantine. The second superintendent is Eliahu Mammi, with whom I lodged. The little community has built for itself a beautiful new synagogue; but altogether they are very ignorant, and live according to the customs adopted by them in Cabyla. Although their houses are built in the European style, still in the interior they more

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before entering the Mediterranean Sea. — Respecting the general condition of the Jews in Egypt, I will only add that our brethren live happily there under the present Government, and enjoy every privilege. They trade with all countries of Europe, — particularly with England, — and even with the farthest parts of the world. There are many very rich bankers among them. — I believe they owe all the privileges they enjoy to the preponderating influence of the European Consuls.

This country offers every means of safety for travellers.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

II. Trabolus (Tripoli di Berberice).

The town of Tripoli is on the Mediterranean Sea; it is a considerable commercial town and has a large population, composed chiefly of Mussulmans. The Jewish community numbers about 1000 families: it has four Chachamim, who are called Dajanim (Justices of the place). The eldest is named Rabbi Abraham Adadi, the second Rabbi Shalom Agaw, — he is blind; the third Rabbi Joseph Ruben, and the fourth Rabbi Fredjah. They are all very well versed in the Talmud and in the Codex. The community has eight Synagogues, which, since the Turkish Government has been established there, have been enlarged and well arranged. They have also teachers to instruct the children in Hebrew and Italian. The Chaid (Nassi) of the community is Rabbi Shalom Titu, a rich and learned man, who possesses an extensive library (Jeshiva) in his house, and on account of his probity he is held in as much esteem by the Pacha as

among them were mostly professional men, and that but few carried on any trade.

Near this town begins the great desert of *Sahara*. A journey of twenty days through the desert brings one to *Sudan*, in the middle of Timbuctoo; only one small market town is to be found half way on the road. Caravans go there but very seldom, for if one does venture to do so, it generally goes to its own destruction.

I had intended to undertake a journey to Timbuctoo, but my limited means prevented me from carrying out this project.

I travelled from Setif to *Bugia* (Arabic Busaje) on horseback; a three days' journey through deserts and over great mountains. Thence I departed by steamer for Algeria.

It was in March 1854 that I arrived in Algeria. It is not necessary for me to speak of this town, its harbour, and the extensive trade and commerce which have there been developed; all this is sufficiently well known, and has often been described. About 1000 Jewish families reside there. The chief Rabbi appointed by the French Government is A. M. Weill. He is the chief superintendent of all the Jews in Algeria, and a very learned and benevolent man. The secretary of the community is R. Simon, an European, and likewise very well informed. The second chief Rabbi is Rabbi Jacob Smasi, an African. The Dajanim are Rabbi Sadia Amur, Rabbi David Mati, his brother Saul Mati, and Rabbi Salomo Delila; all well versed in the Talmud and Codex. The community possesses two large and ten small synagogues. — Much care is bestowed upon the school instruction of the children in the Hebrew and French languages.

In this town I remained nearly six months, and published there my two works: „*Une année de séjour aux Indes orientales*“ (printed by Dubos frères), and „*Nesiad Israel*“ (printed by Chaim Cohen Shulal). During my stay there I found a most hospitable reception in the house of Isaac Stora, a very rich manufacturer, descended from the banished Jews

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Rokaeach, for the relief of the poor, who manages the funds of the community. The support of the poor and of the Chachamim is managed by every merchant giving weekly 5 per Ct. on the gain of his business for this purpose. The overseer for the poor goes every week to the commercial people, examines their books, and takes in cash 5 per Ct. of the profits.

The Jews here are very religious. Every Monday and Thursday the Dajanim settle processes and adjust quarrels. If any one has committed a crime against religion, he is brought before the Cadi or the Chachamim, and punished by a fine or by the bastinado. Every morning and evening most of the inhabitants repair to the Synagogue to perform their devotions, and many men and women fast every new moon. In the newmoon of the month of Ellul (August) almost all the Jews fast until the day of atonement; and there are even women who fast during the whole of the week. At the end of the week there is a large feast prepared, to which all friends and acquaintances are invited, and various kinds of confits and sweetmeats are sent to the houses of those who are not able to come. On the Sabbath and festival days all go to the Synagogue, and they perform their devotions there with greater fervour than I have generally seen elsewhere.

I remarked in the Synagogue that on Friday evenings the prayer Shemona Ezra (silent prayer) is prayed aloud by the reciter; a custom which is not permitted by the law. On inquiring the reason for this, I was told that formerly in their ignorance they had only celebrated the Sabbath-day until a Chacham had instructed them in the observance of Friday evening and, in memory of this, they had determined to have this prayer recited aloud.

Many dress in the same fashion as in Tunis, others in the fashion of Algiers, and many others wear a peculiar costume consisting of a long garment reaching to the knees, a short burnon, white trousers reaching to the knees, and red shoes. The women wear for headdress a red fez, wound round with a silk kerchief, and handsomely ornamented

Six hours' journey from Algiers by omnibus is the town of *Blidah*; about 100 Jewish families live here, they have two synagogues, but no Chacham. It struck me as remarkable that the Jews in this town are unable to pronounce the Hebrew Kuph (hard K): they pronounce it like Uph. They live mostly in the African manner, are in general very rich, and carry on a flourishing trade.

Eight hours' journey by omnibus from Blidah is *Medeah*, there reside 300 Jewish families; they have four synagogues and a Chacham named Rabbi Jeshua, who occupies himself with the cabala, and wears only quite white garments. He is tolerably well versed in the Talmud, and has two wives. — I lodged in the town with the Merchant Rabbi Moshe Ajes, a very rich man.

After a journey on horseback of a day and a half I arrived at *Miljanah*; there reside about 400 Jewish families, who have three synagogues and a Chacham, Rabbi Jacob from Morocco. The town is situated on the summit of a high mountain, and is encircled by a chain of mountain which is the most important in Algeria. The mountain air is particularly fresh and healthy, and in the town there is an abundance of good fresh water. Although the houses are built in the European style, their interior arrangements, as well as the mode of life of the inhabitants are quite in accordance with the customs of the natives.

A further ride of the mountains brought me to *Nittelchad*. This town lies in a beautiful valley: it is still in its infancy, and the French are building a fortress there. About 20 Jewish families reside here; they have no Chacham, but possess a small synagogue; their dwellings and mode of life are quite African.

A further journey of a day and a half on horseback brought me to *Tijerad*. This town is built on a little hill, and is still in an unfinished state; here also the French are making fortifications. The Jewish community consists of 100 families, who have a synagogue and a Chacham, Rabbi Abraham, a native of Oran, and with him I lodged. The

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the crowns of the finest palm trees are cut off, and the part is covered with a particular kind of plaster. After about fifteen days, when the whole sap of the tree has been thus drawn up, small pieces, to act as taps, are then inserted into the trunk of the tree, and beneath these, vessels are placed, into which the wine runs. I was told that in this manner sometimes 1000 to 1500 piastres worth of wine could be drawn from one tree; but the tree dies in consequence.

A journey of a day and a half from here is the village of Muslata, close to a large chain of mountains, near the coast; here grows a particularly excellent grape. In this little place live about 150 Jewish families, who have a Chacham named Rabbi Moshe; the Nassi of the little community is Mailum Pinchas; they likewise have a synagogue.

Again another day and a half's journey from this place over a sandy mountain lies the village of Zelitna, where are 100 Jewish families. Here good wine is produced, much corn grows, and there are several palms. A journey of a day and a half farther on, after passing through a little desert, one arrives at the village of Mesurata; here live about 100 Jewish families, who have two synagogues. Very few palms are to be found near this village, but good wine and fruits. It lies close to the Mediterranean Sea, and carries on no small trade with Malta.

After a journey by sea of four days I came to the town of Bengasi. Here dwell about 400 Jewish families, who are divided into two communities, of which one is called the community of Tripoli, and the other the community of Bengasi. Each community has its own particular synagogue, but they are both superintended by the same Chacham, Rabbi Isaac Chalfon.

The villages I visited to the west of Tripoli are the following: Eight hours' journey from the town lies Sawia, a village, where very extensive palm plantations are to be found, and from whence quantities of dates are exported. The Jewish community consists of about 40 families, who have a Chacham and a synagogue. — Two days' journey

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Rabbi appointed by the French government is Rabbi David Cohen; the Dajanim are native Africans, Rabbi Jeshua, Rabbi Amaram etc. The president of the Consistorium is Abraham-ben-Jesu, whose brother, Rabbi Chaim, is a very learned man, and well versed in Hebrew, Arabic, and French; both are very charitable. — The Jews here live and dwell partly in the European and partly in the African style. — Near the town is a high mountain, Djebel Djudi, where are still to be found ancient fortifications of the time of the Romans. I lodged with a rich druggist named Michluw Assass. Many Jews from Morocco, particularly from the town of Tetuan, have settled in Oran, and a great number of Spaniards (Christians) have likewise settled themselves here, as in eight hours one can cross over to Spain. Arabic, French, and Spanish are spoken in the town. A steamer comes to Oran every five days from Algiers, and every ten days from Marseilles; and this last goes on to Gibraltar.

From *Oran*, Tlemsan can be reached by omnibus in twelve hours. Here dwell 500 Jewish families, who have three synagogues. The Dajanim are: Rabbi Mirod, and Rabbi Samuel; the superintendent is Rabbi Jacob, and the second superintendent is Maimon Serbeth. In the Jewish burial ground are the remains of Rabbi Ephraim Aluncava, who came here among other banished Jews from Spain; but admission into the town being denied them, they settled outside the walls. Rabbi Ephraim was a very skillful doctor, and by his learning and unselfishness he was the cause of his exiled brethren being allowed to enter and dwell in the town. It happened thus: The daughter of the Cadi was dangerously ill, and given over by all the doctors. Then Rabbi Ephraim entreated the distressed father to allow him to give his help as a last resource, — and in ten days the patient was restored to health. As the sole recompense for this he implored the Cadi to permit his brethren to dwell in the town, — and this request was granted. I went to the burial ground in order to find on his tombstone the date of his death; although the inscription was

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shawl round their head and the upper part of their body; their feet are ornamented with rings, and are bare like those of the men. Their holiday attire is but seldom washed, their every day clothes *never*; it can easily therefore be imagined that they are very dirty.

I took a suitable opportunity to make inquiries of some of my fellow-worshippers, how it was that so little importance was attached to either cleanliness of person or of dress; for besides the disagreeable impression their uncleanliness made on every one, they were moreover acting against the law, as the Bible in several places gives directions respecting the cleansing and washing of apparel. In answer to this, I was told that it was caused by fear of the Arabs, who, if they saw them different would imagine they were rich, and plunder them daily. This excuse seemed plausible.

For two hours early in the morning the women are occupied in grinding the corn, from which they afterwards make bread: one may generally hear them singing at their task. It struck me particularly that the beds of these people were in a remarkably good condition. Their food is very bad; two of their dishes, which are considered delicacies, but which would disgust an European, are the following: Zu-meta and Busi. The first is thus prepared: barley is dried until it is almost scorched, after which it is ground, the flour sifted and mixed with ground carroway seeds. Some water is then poured over this mixture, it is pressed and kneaded in the hand until it becomes dough, and this is eaten with raw onions. They drink water with it, and the dish is much relished. *Busi* is prepared in the following way: water is boiled, and salt and wheat flour poured into it; this is well stirred together, until it becomes a thick, hard dough, which is put into a large dish; a greasy sauce is then made and poured over it. The whole family then seat themselves round the dish, and, as knives and forks are not known, each plunges his hand into the dish, tears off a portion of the dough, dips it several times into the greasy

Thence I returned to Tlemsan, in order to repair to Morocco. One and a half days' journey from Tlemsan is *Magnia*, where the territories of Algeria and Morocco unite. Not far from this place, on Algerian soil, is a silver mine, which is well worked, and yields abundantly.

On the whole it can be asserted without hesitation that the Jews in Algeria live in a happy condition under the French Government. In most places they have Chachamim and teachers paid by Government, and the instruction of the young is well conducted. The young are well satisfied with the French Government, but the older members with whom I spoke on the subject, fancy that since the French have taken possession of the country, religious feeling has been on the decline, and that commercial transactions are not so profitable as when the Arabs were in power. To this I replied, quoting the words of Salomon, that „Better is a dry morsel, and quietness therewith, than an house full of sacrifices and strife,"[1] and that it was therefore better to live under the orderly civilised Government of the French, rather than under the fanaticism and oppression of the Arabs.

[1] Proverbs c. XVII. 1.

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CHAPTER XLII.

V. Morocco.

In coming to Morocco from Algeria, the same feelings are experienced, only in a contrary form and in a still greater degree, as those which I described when entering Algeria from Tunis. One comes from a paradise into a desert, and as soon as the soil of civilised Algeria is exchanged for Morocco, dangers of every kind begin.

From Magnia, the French frontier town, one passes through a desert to *Ushda*. The distance between these two places is about six hours' journey. To the south of Ushda are the mountains of Bene Isnaz, inhabited by robbers and bandits, who not only plunder the caravans passing through the vicinity, but even oftentimes attack the town of Ushda, and pillage it. No European can form an idea of the fearfully dirty state of this town, otherwise it is large, and surrounded by gardens. About 70 to 80 families dwell here; and they have two Chachamim and a synagogue. This latter is in the most deplorable condition, which is, however, to be excused on account of the condition of affairs here; for were it in any other state, it would be pillaged and destroyed by the Arabs. The Nassi of the community is Isaac Sarbeth, a very rich man, and in order to give some idea of the oppression of the Jews, I will describe his dwelling. In a courtyard surrounded by a wall, stood a small dirty little house; it certainly had a door, but there were no windows to be seen from the outside. In the interior there were several apartments, but all bare and dark; not a bed, not a chair, not a piece of household

furniture was to be seen; only a mattrass made of palm leaves. On my inquiring the reason for this dwelling being so poverty struck and wretched, I was told by the possessor that he did not dare venture to arrange it better for fear of plunder. — If an Arab enters a house, the Jews must speak as humbly to him as if he were a prince. If he takes away with him anything that happens to please him, not a remark, not a murmur must be heard, otherwise the intruder would immediately draw his knife, and there is neither judge nor law for the protection of the plundered and oppressed.

Immediately on entering this country, I saw that the journey through it must and would be attended with great dangers; but as I had made up my mind to reconnoitre it, I arrayed myself in the garb of the country, joined a caravan, and made a journey of twenty-five days into the interior over *Temessuin, Teza, Fez, Tetuan* to *Gibraltar,* whence I returned to Algiers. I am unable to describe all the hardships and dangers with which this journey was attended, although I was well acquainted with the language of the country and the customs of the people. Neither Jew nor Christian can be sure of his life for a single moment. At the least offence, which the inhabitants try to provoke, a stranger is immediately taken before the authorities, fined, and maltreated, as false witnesses and evidence can be found without much search. And this takes place not only in affairs of religion, but in any fictitious cause they may choose to invent; they dispose just as they like, without either right or justice, of the lives and property of those of another faith.

As a proof of this, I will here relate the history of an unhappy Jewish maiden, and may this history also serve as a proof that among the daughters of an oppressed and exiled people there are still women who are worthy to be placed by the side of a Huldah and Deborah in the old heroic time of our forefathers; may it likewise prove the piety of the Jews of Morocco, and be a bright example to the educated women of our people in Europe.

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In Tansa, a town of Morocco, lived a Jew named Salomon Chatwil, happy and contented in the possession of an excellent wife and several blooming daughters. But the darling and pride, not only of her parents but of all who knew her, was Zuleika, who in the year 5591 (1831) the date of our history, saw spring return for the twelfth time. — Nature desired to create her masterpiece when she created Zuleika. Never had the glowing sun of Africa shone upon more perfect beauty. The most exquisite symmetry of form, the most fair and dazzling complexion contrasted with the delicate and fresh bloom of her cheek, and to these charms was added a profusion of beautiful glossy hair, — while the most lovely eyes were softened by long silken eyelashes. In addition to this, Zuleika was gifted with an intelligent mind, and the mildest and most graceful manners. All the charms excited the envy of the neighbouring Mussulmans. „It is a sin," said they, „that such a pearl should be in the possession of the Jews, and it would be a crime to leave them such a jewel."

With the assertion, — corroborated by false Mussulman witnesses, — that Zuleika had the wish to embrace the Islam faith, they entered the peaceful dwelling of her father, took possession of the beautiful maiden, and carried her to Fez, where they placed their gift, a costly and welcome gift, at the disposal of the heir-apparent of the throne, the son of the Emperor of Morocco.

Even his sated eye had never beheld such beauty; and as if dazzled, he remained standing before her. Heart and hand and all the dignity of an Empress he offered for her possession, annexing only one condition, — that she should adopt his faith. Calmly and decidedly she rejected this offer, and in vain were all the powers of persuasion and promises of the nobles of the court. Her answer was: „The whole world and all its charms and treasures is nothing compared to God and His holy law. He is the Lord of Heaven and Earth, the Creator and Master of all creatures;

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every one is subject to His power both before his birth and after his death. He delivered our forefathers from Egypt, and made us the guardians of His holy law. To this law I submit myself, and I am ready to die for its sake; and, if the Lord requires it, I offer myself willingly as a sacrifice. If ye laid all the treasures of the world at my feet, I would not swerve one hair's breadth from these my words; do with me therefore according to your will."

The prince who saw his proposals thus rejected, endeavoured to obtain by severity what had been refused to persuasion. He ordered Zuleika to be taken to a dungeon; and when it was thought that suffering and privation had sufficiently weakened her youthful strength, Jewish women, who had adopted the Islam faith, were sent to visit her, in order that by promises of every kind, and the example of their own life, they should induce Zuleika to forsake her faith. These women discharged their commission to the letter. All the pomp that could charm a sensual southern disposition, all the representations which a subtile heart could invent, all the terrors which were sufficient to terrify the bravest man were all displayed. — But in vain; every attempt failed to touch the firm and resigned heart of Zuleika. She answered in her usual calm and pious manner: „You wish to persuade me? Earthly life is but like a passing shadow; it is but a fleeting moment compared to eternity: rather, then, one short hour in misery and suffering and eternal bliss, than a life of joy and luxury, to which must follow endless remorse in the world to come. Every one must die, even the highest and most mighty must become food for worms. The Lord of Hosts only is eternal; willingly do I submit myself to His decree. You say that the slightest wish of my heart shall be gratified, well then, I pray to God that He may give me power and strength in His service, and that I may be worthy to be called a daughter of the Jewish people! — Let it soon be over."

One last attempt the prince would make; he summoned the Chachamim of the city, and told them that the lives of

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but we had to undergo many hardships. Several times we were in danger of being dashed on the rocks, and the flow and ebb of the tide caused us much trouble. Our journey lasted ten days, so that at length our provisions were exhausted. We arrived at the little island of Kerkena, eighteen hours' journey in length and four hours' in breadth, between Cabes and Sfax. The island is unfruitful and uncultivated; only wild dates grow there. The Arabs support themselves by fishing, and sell dried fish, with which we satisfied our hunger during the last four days of our voyage. The inhabitants of the island pay no taxes, for they are all soldiers. On the tenth day we arrived at Sfax, and when I first saw the place, it seemed to me as if I was entering a paradise. The streets are paved and clean, the houses very neat and in appearance comfortable, the food good, and well tasted. Nearly 150 Jewish families live here, and they have two synagogues. The Chacham of the community is named Rabbi Saul Chay, the Nassi Rabbi Eliahu Suback. The latter, with whom I lodged, is also tax-collector for the Government, and very rich. Several Italian families also dwell here. — The Jews carry on extensive commercial transactions, and stand in mercantile connexion with Tunis, Malta and Italy, to which they export wool, cotton, corn and olive oil. Their dress resembles that of the Jews of Tunis.

In Sfax the ebb and flow of the tide is very strong; it lasts daily 12 hours, from midnight until midday, and the water recedes about an hour's journey, so that the ships stand dry. From here one can go by sea to Mehedia, Micknin, Monastir and Susa; but, as I had endured so many discomforts during my last sea journey, I joined a caravan, and determined to try the land-route. The Chacham of Sfax travelled with me. The road is through deserts and over mountains, and lasts five days.

Halfway is a valley, about an hour's journey in breadth, the soil of which is quite white, as if covered by a crust of salt; the Arabs call it Geh-Melch (valley of salt). The

The prince granted an annual allowance to the parents of his victim; two of the sisters became insane from grief for the fate of Zuleika. In the year 1854 I made the acquaintance of her family, and have spoken with those who were eye witnesses of her execution. — By many African Chachamim has Zuleika's heroism and piety been made the subject of poetry, and I have the copies of some of the poems, which came under my notice.

Draw near, mothers and daughters of my people, draw near, and learn the greatness of her who dwelt here. See what was done by an ignorant, uneducated — as you would call her — African maiden, who knew nothing of the pomps and vanities of European culture, — who perhaps was not even able to write. Whether you have so educated your daughters and strengthened them in the sacred laws that they are worthy to be called Zuleika's sisters, whether in civilised Europe many such as Zuleika exist? — I know not; — ask and answer yourselves.

Notwithstanding these oppressions, in Morocco, Fez, Tetuan, Tansa, Suera, and in many other towns of the kingdom are to be found a great many Jews, more than 100,000 souls, and even, according to the assertion of the people of the country, not far short of 200,000 souls. They are all very religious; their Chachamim are all well versed in the Talmud, but occupy themselves much with cabalistic matters, and even make a business out of it by copying amulets. The Arab Marabouts likewise carry on this trade. Altogether the Jews are tolerably well informed, with the exception of those dwelling on a tract of land of Tifelel, on the road to Timbuctoo, where the crown prince is now reigning as Viceroy; there the Jews are very ignorant. In many places they possess considerable places of business, and there are many rich Jews among them; but, nevertheless, they live very unhappily. I should be guilty of repe-

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out to him each letter that was hewn in the stone, and he wrote it down. The form of the characters is not square, but resembles that of the Sefardim (Portuguese Jews). The letters were as follows: *Ha, Nun* (final), *Thet, Waw, Daleth Mem, Nun* (initial), *Waw, Thet, Samech, Pe, Kaph, Nun* (final), *Mem, Pe, Nun* (initial), *Waw, Thet, Daleth, Mem, Nun* (initial), *Chaph, Waw, Nun* (initial), *Zadi, Kaph.* Many of the letters I could not at all decipher. In German the letters are as follows: *H, N, T, W, D, M, N, W, T, S, P, K, N, M, P, N, W, T, D, M, N, K, W, N, Z, K.* I could make nothing out of it, at least nothing like what my travelling companion had mentioned; perhaps in the dangerous position I occupied on the wall it may be that I overlooked something. I therefore only note down the letters of the inscription in order to make other travellers attentive to the fact, and to induce them to make further researches. — I believe that the tradition related to me is incorrect, and that the building dates from the Romans; the inscription may have originated later in some unknown way. In many parts of the building I found the names of European travellers, who had visited this place, and to these names I added mine.

In two and a half days I arrived at Susa. We were obliged to hurry our journey so much as to travel by night as well as by day; and this reminded me of the words of Jacob, who exclaimed: „In the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from mine eyes.“ [1]

Susa is a large fortress, lying close to the sea; it possesses a strong garrison. The Jews are divided into two communities: African and Italian. The first numbers about 250, and the Italian about 150 families; both have the same Chacham, whose name is Rabbi Nathan Bursil. The Cadi is called by the Arabs Chogi, and by the Jews Isaac; he is the son of the first Chacham at Tunis, Rabbi Jeshua Basis,

[1] Genesis c. XXXI. 40.

CHAPTER XLIII.

General reflections respecting the Jews of North-Africa.

Their customs and habits. — Ceremonies at the observance of the Sabbath and festival days, and at births, marriages and deaths.

Most Jews go on week days, morning and evening, to the synagogues, and perform their devotions in the usual manner. On Sabbath and festival days all assemble in the temple, where divine service is solemnly performed; and it is very edifying to be present at it. It is divided into several parts, and whoever has a beautiful sonorous voice reads aloud several paragraphs out of the prayer until Istabach, when the reciter goes to the altar, and reads until the Pentateuch is taken out. Piutim are only said on the first Easter evening, on New Year's day, and on the feast of atonement. The chants are very fine, and make a solemn impression on the hearer. The ritual used in Asia as well as in Africa is the Portuguese, and the chants are those peculiar to the country.

The taking forth the Pentateuch is always accompanied by chants. At the reading of the appointed portion of the Pentateuch, it is here the custom, as well as in Asia, that the youngest of those called, if he is able to read well, reads his portion aloud. In many places it is the custom that the one who is called forward to read the Thora, when he retires from the altar, presses the hands of his relations, kisses them on the forehead, shoulder, and hand, and is congratulated and honoured by the members of the community in the same manner.

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is tall, and has a distinguished and noble appearence, he is also rich, learned, and charitable. The third Rabbi, Joseph Bursil, brother to the above mentioned, is about 50 years of age; he is a particularly learned Orientalist, and the author of the work „*Sara de Joseph*“ (Livorno 1852). I lodged for some time in his house, he has a Jeshiwa and several pupils, to whom he gives instruction gratis: he himself studies almost day and night, only allowing himself a few hours for sleep. The fourth Dajan is Rabbi Abraham Cohen; the fifth Rabbi Abraham Askanansi, the sixth Rabbi Moshe Gafid, the seventh Rabbi Gay; the other two I cannot name, as I do not know them. The community possesses four large synagogues and above fifty smaller ones. There are more than 800 very well instructed Talmudists in the town, and the other Jews are also not badly informed.

The Italian community has three especial Dajanim. The first is Rabbi David Bunan, the second Rabbi David Kartusu, and the third Rabbi Joseph Lambrusu. They have one large and two smaller synagogues.

I need not speak of the widely spreading trade of the city of Tunis which extends over all the countries of Europe; for this is a matter generally known. The fez manufactories are here very celebrated, as well as those of dyes, which are both mostly carried on by Jews. Among the Jewish inhabitants are some very rich, some even millionaires; many of them occupy appointments under Government. For instance, the Cadi Rabbi Joseph Belaiz, president of the Jewish community, is decorated with the Nissan (order); Cadi Nisim Semama is Chancellor of the Exchequer; Cadi Salomo Bursil likewise fills some appointment, and there are many others I am not able to enumerate. All these men dress in the European style, with the exception of wearing the red fez. The Jews of Tunis are benevolent and upright men; the Government allows them every privilege, but they still suffer from the fanaticism of the Arabs. Their houses are generally two stories high and very clean; their courtyards are not unfrequently paved with marble.

The customs and preparations on Easter eve take place in the same way as with us in Europe; only in Africa they have the following custom, that at the first portion of the reading concerning the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt, one of the family circle gets up, and holds the dish, containing the food in remembrance of those times, over the head of each person present for some moments; and if any one is omitted on this occasion, he considers himself very unfortunate. This custom is found particularly in Tunis, while the educated in Algeria do not know it. In Asia another good custom has been introduced at this festival. A boy is habited completely in the garb of a pilgrim. With a pilgrims staff in his hand, and a wallet with bread on his shoulders, he enters the assembled family circle before the reading commences. The master of the house then asks the boy: „Whence dost thou come, oh Pilgrim?“ — „From Mizrajim!“ answers the boy. — „Art thou delivered from the bonds of slavery?“ is the next question. — The boy replies: „Yes, I am free and delivered.“ — „And where goest thou?“ is then asked .„To Jerushalajim,“ answers the pilgrim. Amid great rejoicing and friendly greeting those present then begin the Hagada. The reading of this takes place on the first Easter night in the Hebrew language, and the second night in the language of the country: everywhere the women take part in it. Festive songs and hymns are sung, and the whole ceremony makes not only an agreeable, but likewise a very edifying and inspiring impression. From the third until the sixth day cards are much played, and in this even the Chachamim take part. During the whole of the festival no one thinks of business or work, but the days are spent in religious exercises and in amusements. On the last day of the feast, fresh stems of corn are brought from the field into the houses, and scattered with flowers and fresh green in the rooms, and placed upon the tables, as a symbol of the spring and of the blessing of the new year entering the house. — In Algeria it is the custom to go on this

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Bagdad ladies are very industrious, while it is quite the contrary with those in Tunis. In Tunis as well as in Bagdad the girls marry from the age of thirteen.

I here mention a peculiar and most remarkable custom of the country. Among the native women, Arabs as well as Jews and Christians, exists a firm belief in evil spirits and ghosts, and the most different kinds of events are attributed to their influence. If, for instance, a woman falls ill, and on the third day is not better, she believes herself persecuted by Satan or one of his imps, and, according to firm and general belief, there is no earthly remedy for the cure of her complaint; the woman can only regain her health by an union with the evil one, — a complete marriage. With respect to this, the most curious ceremonies are observed. The sick person invites her female relations and acquaintances to a feast; seven different dishes are cooked and served up; the women seat themselves round the table, but the sick person remains lying in her bed. Music must not fail at this entertainment; a band of musicians (tamburine and kettle drummers) therefore is invited, but only on condition that they are all blind. When the party of women are seated round the table, the eldest of them takes an empty dirty spoon, fills it with a portion of each of the seven dishes, and carries it to the cloaca in the courtyard; this is the portion for the evil one, then the women themselves devour the rest. The musicians make a horrible noise with their drums and tambourines, singing and howling particular songs at the same time. At the conclusion of the meal, the women begin to dance and to jump, and get at last into such a state of excitement, that by degrees they even disencumber themselves of their garments. The patient is taken from her bed, drawn into the whirl of the dancers, deprived of her clothing, and in thus made to dance with the others in this wild frenzy. They shriek, scream, sing, till there is really quite a satanic noise; at last they all fall down exhausted, and roll about on the floor in a state bordering on convulsions. At this moment is believed that the

compelled to apostatize, and were therefore killed, is read aloud just as it is written in the Medrash Rabba, in the language of the country. The Chacham and the community sing alternately verse by verse different funeral dirges. In Kurdistan they have another custom. The Chacham gets up and says: „My brethren, to-day it is so many years since our holy temple was destroyed, and we have not yet been able to rebuild it!“ At these words all the lights are extinguished, and all throw themselves down with their faces to the earth, and begin to lament and weep. Then one light is lighted, and with songs of lamentation the history of Chana is read aloud in the Kurdish language. In the morning all again assemble in the synagogue, and in many places the men put on their Tephilim on this occasion; the customary prayers are recited, and the Kinoth is delivered; the Pentateuch is covered with black, and ashes are strewn. At the reading of the Hafthora, each verse is translated into the language of the country, and commented on, at which songs of lamentation are sung.

At the feast of *Rosh-ha-Shana* (New Year's feast) all assemble in the synagogue, where prayers are said, and several Piutim are spoken. The reading of the Pentateuch takes place as in Europe; only in Asia and Africa all remain quiet at the sounding of the Shofar, and listen motionless to the sounds of the symbolic trumpet. Divine service is closed in the forenoon with the Musaph-prayer.

On the feast of Aerew-Jom-Kipur (the day before the feast of atonement) one finds in Asia and Africa the use of the Kaparoth in some places very strictly, but in other places not so rigidly observed. In the afternoon of this day the vesper prayer is recited in the synagogue, and the ceremony of the Malkot is performed as with us. In Persia this custom is observed according to the description of the Talmudist in the Messechet Sanhedrin. The person whose turn it is, bares himself to the waist, leans against one of the pillars, and receives his 39 regular hard blows with the Malka, after which he goes into the Tewilla (cold bath).

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At *the birth of a boy* the following customs are observed: From the day of birth until that of circumcision, an entertainment is given each evening in the house, to which acquaintances and relations are invited. That on the first night is called Seudad Eliahu (repast of Elijah); that on the last night before the circumcision is called Bilada; and all the relations and friends assemble. The Chachamim read for about two hours, after which the entertainment commences from the conclusion of which till towards morning the time is spent in reading, chanting etc. On the morning of the eighth day the circumcision takes place in the synagogue with great solemnities.

At *the birth of a girl* on the evening before the eighth day the Chachamim, relations and friends are invited to an entertainment. The new born child in a little cradle is presented to the first Chacham, who gives it to the second, and the second to the third, and thus it goes on until the child has passed through every hand. Three times is this ceremony repeated amid the singing of Piutim, and each time that those present receive the cradle with the child in their hands, they place in it a piece of money, and this money is destined for the midwife.

The *Barmizwa* (confirmation) is celebrated in the following manner: When a boy is thirteen years of age, some weeks previously the Chacham teaches him an address. On the Sabbath before the Barmizwa, called Tephilim (phylacteries), the relations are invited to an entertainment which lasts until Sunday morning. On the afternoon of this day, the women, dressed in their festive attire, go to all the friends and acquaintances, as well as to the schoolfellows of the boy, and invite them to the feast. When all are assembled, a barber is sent for, who shaves the head of the boy to be confirmed, as well as the heads of his schoolfellows, and every guest at the feast contributes a piece of money, which is given to the barber. After this a merry meal takes place, which often lasts until morning. On Monday morning the synagogue is festively decorated, and the

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But for some length of time I dared not show myself abroad; for this story and the part I had taken in it became known, and the women were much enraged against me.

Another time I was invited to a party, at which a number of women were present. One of the natives asked me if I should like to see such a bit of fun as I have above described, for that he would try and arrange such an amusement for me. He then went to the musicians and told them to begin the appropriate songs and music used at the devil's marriage ceremony. They began accordingly, and after a short time the women, excited by the sound of that wild music and singing, began to scream, sing and dance. One of the quieter ones begged us to put an end to the affair, and we ordered the musicians to cease. Had we not done this, we certainly should have had the whole spectacle played before us, for the women seemed, as if they were suddenly all bewitched. When all again became quiet, they quitted the party full of shame.

The Chachamim of the town have often troubled themselves to put an end to this absurd custom, but all their efforts have hitherto been in vain.

Belief in witches and witchcraft is also general; and even some of the women offer themselves publicly in the streets to practise witchcraft, and any one who desires to hear his future foretold or to see her magic art, calls one of these women into his house, and lets her make her experiments. I was curious to see something of this, and was at the same time anxious to prove to the people that the whole affair was absurd. Accidentally, one day just such a hag passed the house where I was on a visit, and I begged that the woman might be called in, and allowed to show her sorceries. This request was granted, but unwillingly. The woman entered, and was asked to show her art. She took a vessel, went silently to the well in the courtyard, and murmuring all the time some unintelligible words, filled it with water; she then came to me, and desired me to wash my chest and my hands in the water,

morning the bridegroom with his friends and the bride with her companions go to the bath. In the afternoon, after the bridegroom has dressed himself in his festive attire and Taled, he is conducted by the Chachamim and those belonging to him to the synagogue, where vesper prayer is recited, after which they conduct him home. At the marriage ceremony a high decorated chair is placed in the courtyard, to which the Chachamim and parents conduct the bride veiled. When she has seated herself in the chair, the bridegroom advances to her right side, the Chacham intolds the young couple in the Taled of the bridegroom, and pronounces the Berachot; after which he gives the wedding rings to the bride and bridegroom. The songs of the assembled guests add to the impression made by the ceremony. The Ketuba (marriage contract) is then read aloud, and the marriage is finished. When it is concluded, the young pair are conducted to the house, the company separates to reassemble again in the evening for an entertainment. While this is going on, the young couple are conducted into a separate room and left alone. After some time the bridegroom returns to the company, and, if in all things his wife answers his expectations he receives the congratulations of the relations and assembled guests. Then at the merry meal, amid music and singing, the night is spent until break of day. The young couple remain in the parents house for seven days after the marriage, and each evening these entertainments are repeated. On the Sabbath after the wedding the bridegroom, amid songs, and accompanied by many persons, repairs to the synagogue: the bride remains at home. All the relations are summoned, and at the reading of the lesson for the week, they and the bridegroom bestow considerable gifts on the Chachamim and the poor. With songs, and accompanied by the same train as before, the bridegroom returns to the house of the bride, where one last grand feast is prepared, which with joy and merry making lasts until the following morning.

In Persia they have another custom. There likewise for seven days after the wedding the Chachamim, relations,

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time well informed. There is in the town an extensive fishery, established by the Bey, and its produce (salted and dried fish, and liver-oil) forms an important article of export trade.

The Arabs of the town belong partly to a peculiar sect, which is called Ousawi, and which is subdivided into several parties; each party taking some chosen animal as a symbol, and being called after it. Thus, there are Ousawi of lions, bears, camels, and ostriches. The followers of these sects accompany the pilgrims coming from and going to Mecca in and out of the town, a matter which is always attended with much solemnity, music, and pomp. At these festive processions the Ousawi get into such an excited state of religious fanaticism that they appear to have lost their reason. They behave like the wild animals they have taken for their symbol; they roar like a lion, growl like a bear, and I was told that they even took their food after the manner of these animals; thus the lion- and bear-Ousawi would eat raw flesh, and even tear and swallow live chickens, while the ostrich-Ousawi gulp down stones and glass, until blood flows from their mouths; and the camel-Ousawi devour thorns and thistles. Their animal ferocity in this condition goes so far, that they are obliged to be led about in chains; though the Sheik, who commands each party, possesses such great power over them that by simply touching them on the shoulder he is able to quiet them.

The Chacham of the town related to me these facts, but as I was somewhat incredulous, I asked several Arabs concerning it, and by them the accounts were confirmed; during my stay there, however, I did not see anything of it.

One day's journey from *Bunsard* in a southern direction is the town of *Erswil*, and two days' journey farther on *Matar*; again at a day and a half's journey *Bizerta*, and another day and a half's journey from thence *Tistur*, and two and a half days' journey still farther is *Rukaf*. From

After having described these customs from birth to death, I conclude with the words of Salomon, who says in Ecclesiastes c. VII, 1. 2: „A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of birth. It is better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men, and the living will lay it to his heart.“ And fervently do I wish that the words of the Prophet Isaiah may be fulfilled which are written Isaiah XXV, 8. 9: „He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall be taken away from off all the earth; for the Lord hath spoken it. And it shall be said in that day, 'Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord: we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation!'“

The Portuguese conquests and discoveries with respect to the Jews. [1]

By Dr. M. Kayserling.

João I, Henry the Navigator, Alfonzo the African, João de Menezes, Azambuja, Vasco de Gama, Columbus, Albuquerque, Cabral, Cortez, Pizarro — what names are these of mighty men! What histories and heroic deeds are associated with these adventurers and conquerors! With what rapture and delight does the boy listen to the relation of their discoveries and their battles by sea and by land. No people in Europe was animated by such a spirit of enterprise as the Portuguese; to the discoveries of their Infants and admirals they owe their power, and Portugal acquired

[1] In conclusion we give the following well written article by Dr. *M. Kayserling*, which is to be found in *Frankel's „Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judenthums“*, Decembre 1858.

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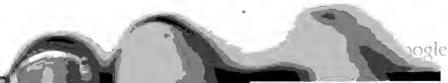
me strange that Mussulman women should visit a synagogue in such a manner; and, in reply I heard the following story. — Several hundred years ago, at very high tide in stormy weather, a plank was driven very near ashore; some Mussulmans tried to fish it out, but it receded; and the same thing happened when some Christians endeavoured to draw it out: some Jews, however, having come and made the attempt, the plank was driven to land, and there remained. Fastened on this plank they found a Pentateuch, and this they conveyed to the synagogue, and displayed it there. From this miracle arose the belief in the holiness of the room where the Pentateuch was preserved, and whenever a woman, either Mussulman or Christian, is not well, she has only to come here, to pray and make offerings in order to recover. — I expressed my disbelief in the miraculous power of this sanctuary, and explained the history of the fishing out of the plank and the Pentateuch from the sea quite simply; for, if the story was true, perhaps some Jew might have suffered shipwreck and might have fastened the Pentateuch to a plank in order that it might not be lost; but, that it should have happened that Jews had drawn it up, when Mussulmans and Christians had failed to do it, I declared to be either an accident, or that the sea must have become calmer during the time. After such an inference they considered me an unbeliever, and scolded me as such.

The distance between Bona to Constantine can be accomplished on horseback in three days.

I went by steamer to Philippeville, and thence in twelve hours to Constantine.

The town of Constantine is built on the top of a mountain; it is a considerable fortress, and surrounded by strong walls. Outside the walls, a natural moat, 200 feet deep and 40 feet broad, surrounds the town, and at a further distance a chain of mountains encircles the whole. In the upper part of the town reside the Europeans, and this is also the commercial part, whilst in the lower part live the



Some years later Larash (El Araish) was taken. On this occasion the Portuguese took as prisoners of war four Moors, and two Jews.[1]

The youthful Infant Henry, surnamed by history „the Navigator and Geographer", assisted in person at these first African campaigns. To render himself and his native land illustrious by the discoveries of new countries, to obtain larger possessions for Portugal, to furnish new resources and advantages for trade, — this was the noble aim which the enlightened navigator had set before himself. With enthusiasm, perseverance, and energy he devoted himself to astronomy; — and Jews from their experience and knowledge gave the first assistance to his undertaking. From Jews he received the first statements of the places traversed by them in the course of their commercial transactions, — places hitherto unknown to him, — and from their accounts his supposition amounted to certainty, that a communication between Europe and India could be found; and every Jewish traveller coming from a far country found the kindest reception at the observatory of this courteous prince.

The island of Madeira with its unchanging spring, the home of the ancestor of the celebrated Belmonte, was discovered by him.[2]

Storms and revolts at home withdrew for a time the Portuguese from these undertakings.

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que era com os nossos etc. The Jews in Portugal were thus early engaged in sea service, and the statement of Shalshelet Hakabbala that Sal. Jachia was a leader of horsemen thus gains belief; and, in fact, for no other reason has this statement been declared a „mere fable", but only because it was related by the „*Lügenkette*" (set of liars). Would any one believe Shalshelet if he, for instance, stated that under Alphonzo VII, and Alphonzo VIII of Castille Jews took part in the treaties of the Cortes, — which every one knows at the present day represented our chambers of Deputies — and even subscribed the Fueros?

1 *Chronica do Conde D. Pedro 405.*

2 Compare my Sephardin: *Romantische Poesien der Juden in Spanien,* 289. Leipzig 1859.

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resemble the tents in which they used to dwell among the Cabyles. They dress in a very simple manner, wearing a long garment reaching down to the ancles, and over this they hang a burnon. They cover their heads with a fez, upon which is a small turban. The women dress in a manner quite as simple. Care has of late been bestowed on the instruction of the children.

Not far from Setif begins the country of the Cabyles. On my inquiring of the Jews of Setif, if there were many fellow-worshippers among the Cabylian tribes, I received an assurance in the affirmative; according to their assertions there is a considerable Jewish tribe at Cabyla, whom the Arabs call Bene-Mussa (children of Moses), tall, brave warriors. — May not these be the Bene-Moshe of whom my fellow-worshippers speak? — It was also told me that there was likewise an Arab tribe of the name of Emare, whom the other Mahomedans call Chums. They are followers of Mahomedanism and are called Chums (five) because, as it was told me, after they have washed themselves according to the directions of the law before divine service, they make some mysterious sign with their five fingers pressed together, for which reason they are hated and despised by the other Mahomedans. The tribe of the Chum Arabs is very hospitable, and when a traveller comes to them, he is sure of a friendly shelter from one of them, and they even bring him a companion from among the widows of the tribe.

Two days' journey from Setif is the town of *Bu-Sada*, and three days' journey to the south is *Luguard*; this was conquered by the French in the year 1852, on which occasion very many Jews, who were among the Arab warriors, perished. Eight days' journey southward from this last place is *Beni-Mezab*, the Arab inhabitants of which form an independant tribe; — Ali, the Persian founder of religion, is honoured by them as a prophet. A tolerably large community dwells in the town, but they are under great oppression. I spoke with several Arabs from Beni-Mezab, and they told me that the Jews dwelling

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among them were mostly professional men, and that but few carried on any trade.

Near this town begins the great desert of *Sahara*. A journey of twenty days through the desert brings one to *Sudan*, in the middle of Timbuctoo; only one small market town is to be found half way on the road. Caravans go there but very seldom, for if one does venture to do so, it generally goes to its own destruction.

I had intended to undertake a journey to Timbuctoo, but my limited means prevented me from carrying out this project.

I travelled from Setif to *Bugia* (Arabic Busaje) on horseback; a three days' journey through deserts and over great mountains. Thence I departed by steamer for Algeria.

It was in March 1854 that I arrived in Algeria. It is not necessary for me to speak of this town, its harbour, and the extensive trade and commerce which have there been developed; all this is sufficiently well known, and has often been described. About 1000 Jewish families reside there. The chief Rabbi appointed by the French Government is A. M. Weill. He is the chief superintendent of all the Jews in Algeria, and a very learned and benevolent man. The secretary of the community is R. Simon, an European, and likewise very well informed. The second chief Rabbi is Rabbi Jacob Smasi, an African. The Dajanim are Rabbi Sadia Amur, Rabbi David Mati, his brother Saul Mati, and Rabbi Salomo Delila; all well versed in the Talmud and Codex. The community possesses two large and ten small synagogues. — Much care is bestowed upon the school instruction of the children in the Hebrew and French languages.

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of Spain. He has taken his name from the former residence of his parents, Stora (near Skigada). On the ancient place of burial belonging to the community are to be found the tombs of two celebrated Rabbis, Rabbi Isaac bar Shesheth, author of „*Riwas*“, and Simon ben Cemath, author of „*Tashbaz*“. The family of the latter is called Duran by the native Jews.

The houses of the Jews are built in the European style, and are very neat and clean. Some of them live in the European, others in the African style. Some of the men dress after the fashion of Tunis, and many of the young men wear European attire. The women and girls wear a long silk dress without any sleeves, and ornamented on the breast with gold embroidery. The girls cover their heads with a small pointed cap, on which is fastened gold medallions, and from the peak hangs down a gold or silken tassel. The women wear a fez, which by many of them is wound round with gold and pearls, while others have only a silk kerchief; the hair hangs down in one long braid, twisted round with a blue ribbon.

Among the natives of this town is likewise prevalent a superstitious belief in sorcery, witchcraft, and incantations. In cases of illness they go with an Arab sorceress to a spring which rises near the town, and there, with encantations, they kill a black cock, by cutting its throat with a gold coin, and then with its blood they besmear the chest, forehead &c. of the patient. After this, the sorceress lights a fire, throws different perfumes into it, and then besprinkles this also, as well as the patient, with the blood of the slaughtered cock. After this ceremony the patient is said to recover. All these conjurations only take place on Wednesdays from 8 o'clock in the morning until midday. I myself went once to the place appointed for the purpose, and found upwards of 200 men and women occupied in these ceremonies. The Jewish women have the cock killed for them by their own slaughterer, and take the blood with them in a glass vessel. These ceremonies are called Bechor.

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Six hours' journey from Algiers by omnibus is the town of *Blidah*; about 100 Jewish families live here, they have two synagogues, but no Chacham. It struck me as remarkable that the Jews in this town are unable to pronounce the Hebrew Kuph (hard K): they pronounce it like Uph. They live mostly in the African manner, are in general very rich, and carry on a flourishing trade.

Eight hours' journey by omnibus from Blidah is *Medeah*, there reside 300 Jewish families; they have four synagogues and a Chacham named Rabbi Jeshua, who occupies himself with the cabala, and wears only quite white garments. He is tolerably well versed in the Talmud, and has two wives. — I lodged in the town with the Merchant Rabbi Moshe Ajes, a very rich man.

After a journey on horseback of a day and a half I arrived at *Miljanah*; there reside about 400 Jewish families, who have three synagogues and a Chacham, Rabbi Jacob from Morocco. The town is situated on the summit of a high mountain, and is encircled by a chain of mountain which is the most important in Algeria. The mountain air is particularly fresh and healthy, and in the town there is an abundance of good fresh water. Although the houses are built in the European style, their interior arrangements, as well as the mode of life of the inhabitants are quite in accordance with the customs of the natives.

A further ride of the mountains brought me to *Nittelchad*. This town lies in a beautiful valley: it is still in its infancy, and the French are building a fortress there. About 20 Jewish families reside here; they have no Chacham, but possess a small synagogue; their dwellings and mode of life are quite African.

A further journey of a day and a half on horseback brought me to *Tijerad*. This town is built on a little hill, and is still in an unfinished state; here also the French are making fortifications. The Jewish community consists of 100 families, who have a synagogue and a Chacham, Rabbi Abraham, a native of Oran, and with him I lodged. The

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Jews have imigrated here from Cabyla, and like those of Setif have remained faithful to their former customs and habits. Here also superstition is as prevalent as in other towns. If any person is ill, a cock is killed and its flesh is cooked, which is then called kuskus; it is eaten at a small entertainment to which acquaintances are invited. The remains as well as the feathers of the cock, are then thrown into a well, and this is supposed to be an effectual magical charm to cure illness. — Another magic remedy for illness much employed is the following: They take a bottle or flask of oil, and at night, in order to prevent any one from seeing it, they go into the street, and pour the oil at nine different places on the thresholds of their neighbours' houses; this custom is called Chania.

After another two days' journey on horseback I came to *Maskara*; here reside about 150 Jewish families; they have two synagogues and a Chacham, Rabbi Salomo. I lodged with the merchant Usana, the superintendent of the community, and a very influential man of business.

At a journey of a day and a half south from this place lies the town of *Mostaganem*, and it is just as far to Oran. The first mentioned town is situated about half an hour's journey from the sea, and about 300 Jewish families live there. Their Chacham is Rabbi Aron from Tlemsan; they have also two synagogues. The superintendent of the community is Rabbi Abu. In this town live two very rich Jewish merchants, Salomo Zerphati, a very benevolent man, and Abraham Kinovi, an avaricious millionaire. In Mostaganem I lodged with the merchant Baduch-ben-Chaim, an important manufacturer, who bestowed on me the kindest attention during an illness.

From the latter town, *Oran* can be reached by carriage in twelve hours, and by steamer in eight hours. Oran lies close to the sea, and is built partly in a valley, and partly on the side of a mountain: the importance and extent of its trade are universally known. About 500 Jewish families dwell there and they possess five synagogues. The chief

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Rabbi appointed by the French government is Rabbi David Cohen; the Dajanim are native Africans, Rabbi Jeshua, Rabbi Amaram etc. The president of the Consistorium is Abraham-ben-Jesu, whose brother, Rabbi Chaim, is a very learned man, and well versed in Hebrew, Arabic, and French; both are very charitable. — The Jews here live and dwell partly in the European and partly in the African style. — Near the town is a high mountain, Djebel Djudi, where are still to be found ancient fortifications of the time of the Romans. I lodged with a rich druggist named Michluw Assass. Many Jews from Morocco, particularly from the town of Tetuan, have settled in Oran, and a great number of Spaniards (Christians) have likewise settled themselves here, as in eight hours one can cross over to Spain. Arabic, French, and Spanish are spoken in the town. A steamer comes to Oran every five days from Algiers, and every ten days from Marseilles; and this last goes on to Gibraltar.

From *Oran*, Tlemsan can be reached by omnibus in twelve hours. Here dwell 500 Jewish families, who have three synagogues. The Dajanim are: Rabbi Mirod, and Rabbi Samuel; the superintendent is Rabbi Jacob, and the second superintendent is Maimon Serbeth. In the Jewish burial ground are the remains of Rabbi Ephraim Aluncava, who came here among other banished Jews from Spain; but admission into the town being denied them, they settled outside the walls. Rabbi Ephraim was a very skillful doctor, and by his learning and unselfishness he was the cause of his exiled brethren being allowed to enter and dwell in the town. It happened thus: The daughter of the Cadi was dangerously ill, and given over by all the doctors. Then Rabbi Ephraim entreated the distressed father to allow him to give his help as a last resource, — and in ten days the patient was restored to health. As the sole recompense for this he implored the Cadi to permit his brethren to dwell in the town, — and this request was granted. I went to the burial ground in order to find on his tombstone the date of his death; although the inscription was

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much defaced, I could still decipher the following: „Bisnat Rb. Niftar Rb.“ i. e. in the year 5202, according to Biblical calculation (1442), did the Rabbi die. In the Shem Hagdolim (Wilna 1853) fol. 16 I found a paragraph about him as follows: „Rabbi Ephraim Aluncava was a great Rabbi in the town of Tlemsan in Algeria, and author of the work Shaar Kewoth Adonai.“ The Jews of the town and neighbourhood venerate the tomb of the Rabbi, and make pilgrimages to it, at which time they take food with them, and after prayers partake of part of it at the tomb, and the remains are divided at home among the family; this custom is called Said debe Raw (repast of the Rabbi). Some of them also take some earth from the grave with them, and wear it round their necks; for, according to their belief, this would preserve them in all diseases. The house and synagogue of the Rabbi Ephraim are still in existence, and annually Jews assemble there for devout prayer, after which a feast is arranged.

The town has a very healthy site, and carries on a very flourishing trade. Jews dwell in the neighbouring mountains among the Arabs, but I did not visit them. In Tlemsan I lodged with the merchant Moses Serbeth, a rich manufacturer, who possesses a capital Hebrew library.

One day's journey from here is the town of *Madroma*, which is inhabited by Arabs, and very dirty. The Jewish community consists of 50 families, and possess a synagogue and a slaughterer; although very rich, they are still ignorant, and live according to the customs of the Cabyles.

Six hours' journey farther is the town of *Ghazuwat*, called by the French Nimur. The vessels coming from Algiers on their way to Gibraltar anchor here, and take in cargoes. Fifty Jewish families live here, and they have a small synagogue; their slaughterer is Rabbi Moshe Levy Askanasi, by birth a Pole, and his wife is from Oran, out of the family of Tuwel. The Jews carry on a flourishing trade, are mostly very rich, and the greater part of them live in the European style.

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Thence I returned to Tlemsan, in order to repair to Morocco. One and a half days' journey from Tlemsan is *Magnia*, where the territories of Algeria and Morocco unite. Not far from this place, on Algerian soil, is a silver mine, which is well worked, and yields abundantly.

On the whole it can be asserted without hesitation that the Jews in Algeria live in a happy condition under the French Government. In most places they have Chachamim and teachers paid by Government, and the instruction of the young is well conducted. The young are well satisfied with the French Government, but the older members with whom I spoke on the subject, fancy that since the French have taken possession of the country, religious feeling has been on the decline, and that commercial transactions are not so profitable as when the Arabs were in power. To this I replied, quoting the words of Salomon, that „Better is a dry morsel, and quietness therewith, than an house full of sacrifices and strife,"[1] and that it was therefore better to live under the orderly civilised Government of the French, rather than under the fanaticism and oppression of the Arabs.

[1] Proverbs c. XVII. 1.

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CHAPTER XLII.

V. Morocco.

In coming to Morocco from Algeria, the same feelings are experienced, only in a contrary form and in a still greater degree, as those which I described when entering Algeria from Tunis. One comes from a paradise into a desert, and as soon as the soil of civilised Algeria is exchanged for Morocco, dangers of every kind begin.

From Magnia, the French frontier town, one passes through a desert to *Ushda*. The distance between these two places is about six hours' journey. To the south of Ushda are the mountains of Bene Isnaz, inhabited by robbers and bandits, who not only plunder the caravans passing through the vicinity, but even oftentimes attack the town of Ushda, and pillage it. No European can form an idea of the fearfully dirty state of this town, otherwise it is large, and surrounded by gardens. About 70 to 80 families dwell here; and they have two Chachamim and a synagogue. This latter is in the most deplorable condition, which is, however, to be excused on account of the condition of affairs here; for were it in any other state, it would be pillaged and destroyed by the Arabs. The Nassi of the community is Isaac Sarbeth, a very rich man, and in order to give some idea of the oppression of the Jews, I will describe his dwelling. In a courtyard surrounded by a wall, stood a small dirty little house; it certainly had a door, but there were no windows to be seen from the outside. In the interior there were several apartments, but all bare and dark; not a bed, not a chair, not a piece of household

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furniture was to be seen; only a mattrass made of palm leaves. On my inquiring the reason for this dwelling being so poverty struck and wretched, I was told by the possessor that he did not dare venture to arrange it better for fear of plunder. — If an Arab enters a house, the Jews must speak as humbly to him as if he were a prince. If he takes away with him anything that happens to please him, not a remark, not a murmur must be heard, otherwise the intruder would immediately draw his knife, and there is neither judge nor law for the protection of the plundered and oppressed.

Immediately on entering this country, I saw that the journey through it must and would be attended with great dangers; but as I had made up my mind to reconnoitre it, I arrayed myself in the garb of the country, joined a caravan, and made a journey of twenty-five days into the interior over *Temessuin, Teza, Fez, Tetuan* to *Gibraltar,* whence I returned to Algiers. I am unable to describe all the hardships and dangers with which this journey was attended, although I was well acquainted with the language of the country and the customs of the people. Neither Jew nor Christian can be sure of his life for a single moment. At the least offence, which the inhabitants try to provoke, a stranger is immediately taken before the authorities, fined, and maltreated, as false witnesses and evidence can be found without much search. And this takes place not only in affairs of religion, but in any fictitious cause they may choose to invent; they dispose just as they like, without either right or justice, of the lives and property of those of another faith.

As a proof of this, I will here relate the history of an unhappy Jewish maiden, and may this history also serve as a proof that among the daughters of an oppressed and exiled people there are still women who are worthy to be placed by the side of a Huldah and Deborah in the old heroic time of our forefathers; may it likewise prove the piety of the Jews of Morocco, and be a bright example to the educated women of our people in Europe.

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In Tansa, a town of Morocco, lived a Jew named Salomon Chatwil, happy and contented in the possession of an excellent wife and several blooming daughters. But the darling and pride, not only of her parents but of all who knew her, was Zuleika, who in the year 5591 (1831) the date of our history, saw spring return for the twelfth time. — Nature desired to create her masterpiece when she created Zuleika. Never had the glowing sun of Africa shone upon more perfect beauty. The most exquisite symmetry of form, the most fair and dazzling complexion contrasted with the delicate and fresh bloom of her cheek, and to these charms was added a profusion of beautiful glossy hair, — while the most lovely eyes were softened by long silken eyelashes. In addition to this, Zuleika was gifted with an intelligent mind, and the mildest and most graceful manners. All the charms excited the envy of the neighbouring Mussulmans. „It is a sin," said they, „that such a pearl should be in the possession of the Jews, and it would be a crime to leave them such a jewel."

With the assertion, — corroborated by false Mussulman witnesses, — that Zuleika had the wish to embrace the Islam faith, they entered the peaceful dwelling of her father, took possession of the beautiful maiden, and carried her to Fez, where they placed their gift, a costly and welcome gift, at the disposal of the heir-apparent of the throne, the son of the Emperor of Morocco.

Even his sated eye had never beheld such beauty; and as if dazzled, he remained standing before her. Heart and hand and all the dignity of an Empress he offered for her possession, annexing only one condition, — that she should adopt his faith. Calmly and decidedly she rejected this offer, and in vain were all the powers of persuasion and promises of the nobles of the court. Her answer was: „The whole world and all its charms and treasures is nothing compared to God and His holy law. He is the Lord of Heaven and Earth, the Creator and Master of all creatures;

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every one is subject to His power both before his birth and after his death. He delivered our forefathers from Egypt, and made us the guardians of His holy law. To this law I submit myself, and I am ready to die for its sake; and, if the Lord requires it, I offer myself willingly as a sacrifice. If ye laid all the treasures of the world at my feet, I would not swerve one hair's breadth from these my words; do with me therefore according to your will."

The prince who saw his proposals thus rejected, endeavoured to obtain by severity what had been refused to persuasion. He ordered Zuleika to be taken to a dungeon; and when it was thought that suffering and privation had sufficiently weakened her youthful strength, Jewish women, who had adopted the Islam faith, were sent to visit her, in order that by promises of every kind, and the example of their own life, they should induce Zuleika to forsake her faith. These women discharged their commission to the letter. All the pomp that could charm a sensual southern disposition, all the representations which a subtile heart could invent, all the terrors which were sufficient to terrify the bravest man were all displayed. — But in vain; every attempt failed to touch the firm and resigned heart of Zuleika. She answered in her usual calm and pious manner: „You wish to persuade me? Earthly life is but like a passing shadow; it is but a fleeting moment compared to eternity: rather, then, one short hour in misery and suffering and eternal bliss, than a life of joy and luxury, to which must follow endless remorse in the world to come. Every one must die, even the highest and most mighty must become food for worms. The Lord of Hosts only is eternal; willingly do I submit myself to His decree. You say that the slightest wish of my heart shall be gratified, well then, I pray to God that He may give me power and strength in His service, and that I may be worthy to be called a daughter of the Jewish people! — Let it soon be over."

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all the Jewish inhabitants were in danger if they did not succeed in inducing Zuleika to become willing to fulfil his wishes. Trembling for their own lives and those of their brethren, the Chachamim proceeded to the dungeon. They reminded the tortured girl of the example of Esther, by whose influence her people were so much benefited; but Zuleika silenced them also with the words: „Esther was not called upon to give up the sacred faith of her fathers, but I am to forsake it. If you consider this right, well then, give your daughter to the prince; I will fulfil the law if it be God's will, with my death."

Such an unheard of resistance to the power of the prince could only be expiated by death: the order for beheading her was therefore given. The most lovely of maidens, in the beauty of virtue and the bloom of youth, was conducted to the place of execution.

But the executioner had received orders to try also his powers of persuasion as a last resource in a manner which only an executioner could understand, and he only could accomplish. On the scaffold he gave his victim several thrusts with his sword in her neck, and called upon her to be obedient. „Kafir ben Kafir!" cried the courageous maiden, „spare thy trouble;" and exclaiming: „Hear oh Israel, God alone is our Lord, He alone!" her head fell beneath the heavy blows of the executioner.

With the jet of blood that rose towards heaven vanished the rage of the prince; he felt remorse, and willingly would he have called back life into that beautiful inanimate form. Powerless might of the mighty! They are able to destroy the instrument, but when once destroyed, they can never again awake its melody.

The body of Zuleika was given for burial to the Nassi of the community, Raphael Zerphati. — A monument was erected on the grave, which up to the present day is regarded as a sacred spot by Jews and Mussulmans; and even now that oath is considered sacred which is sworn by the memory of Zuleika.

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The prince granted an annual allowance to the parents of his victim; two of the sisters became insane from grief for the fate of Zuleika. In the year 1854 I made the acquaintance of her family, and have spoken with those who were eye witnesses of her execution. — By many African Chachamim has Zuleika's heroism and piety been made the subject of poetry, and I have the copies of some of the poems, which came under my notice.

Draw near, mothers and daughters of my people, draw near, and learn the greatness of her who dwelt here. See what was done by an ignorant, uneducated — as you would call her — African maiden, who knew nothing of the pomps and vanities of European culture, — who perhaps was not even able to write. Whether you have so educated your daughters and strengthened them in the sacred laws that they are worthy to be called Zuleika's sisters, whether in civilised Europe many such as Zuleika exist? — I know not; — ask and answer yourselves.

Notwithstanding these oppressions, in Morocco, Fez, Tetuan, Tansa, Suera, and in many other towns of the kingdom are to be found a great many Jews, more than 100,000 souls, and even, according to the assertion of the people of the country, not far short of 200,000 souls. They are all very religious; their Chachamim are all well versed in the Talmud, but occupy themselves much with cabalistic matters, and even make a business out of it by copying amulets. The Arab Marabouts likewise carry on this trade. Altogether the Jews are tolerably well informed, with the exception of those dwelling on a tract of land of Tifelel, on the road to Timbuctoo, where the crown prince is now reigning as Viceroy; there the Jews are very ignorant. In many places they possess considerable places of business, and there are many rich Jews among them; but, nevertheless, they live very unhappily. I should be guilty of repe-

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tition if I endeavoured to pourtray their condition; I therefore refer to my accounts relative to the Jews in Persia; for in Morocco, as in Persia, persecution, oppression, hatred, and fanaticism surround our fellow-worshippers on all sides.

But the oppression here goes even still further than in Persia; for while there the Jews are permitted to walk abroad in the costume of the country, they are here obliged to make themselves known by wearing a black fez. It is just the same with respect to the Christians; they in Persia, were allowed some privileges not accorded to the Jews, but here they are treated alike. For instance, when Jews or Christians pass a mosque, they are compelled to take off their shoes and uncover their heads, and mischievous boys scatter pieces of broken glass in the mud of the street in order to wound their feet. If an European ventured to show himself in the street in his native attire, his life would not be safe for one hour; he would be received by a shower of stones, and the cry of „Giaur!“ It is really surprising that a country, situated so near Europe, and carrying on such large and important commercial transactions with it, should dare to be so savage and barbarous towards strangers and natives. It is only in the large harbour towns that the consuls take care that the Europeans find some protection and justice; but in the interior the oppression is all the greater.

If all the great powers of Europe together would endeavour to oppose such barbarism in the places nearest to them, they would do great things for themselves, for science, and for the oppressed.

After having remained there long enough to enable me to form some idea of the state of the country, the great difficulties induced me to return to Algeria, whence, after a short stay, I proceeded to Marseilles in France.

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CHAPTER XLIII.

General reflections respecting the Jews of North-Africa.

Their customs and habits. — Ceremonies at the observance of the Sabbath and festival days, and at births, marriages and deaths.

Most Jews go on week days, morning and evening, to the synagogues, and perform their devotions in the usual manner. On Sabbath and festival days all assemble in the temple, where divine service is solemnly performed; and it is very edifying to be present at it. It is divided into several parts, and whoever has a beautiful sonorous voice reads aloud several paragraphs out of the prayer until Istabach, when the reciter goes to the altar, and reads until the Pentateuch is taken out. Piutim are only said on the first Easter evening, on New Year's day, and on the feast of atonement. The chants are very fine, and make a solemn impression on the hearer. The ritual used in Asia as well as in Africa is the Portuguese, and the chants are those peculiar to the country.

The taking forth the Pentateuch is always accompanied by chants. At the reading of the appointed portion of the Pentateuch, it is here the custom, as well as in Asia, that the youngest of those called, if he is able to read well, reads his portion aloud. In many places it is the custom that the one who is called forward to read the Thora, when he retires from the altar, presses the hands of his relations, kisses them on the forehead, shoulder, and hand, and is congratulated and honoured by the members of the community in the same manner.

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When any one belonging to the community marries, two Pentateuchs are displayed in the synagogue on the Sabbath, and one of these is ornamented with jewels. At the conclusion of the weekly lesson, the bridegroom is called up. He steps with his Pentateuch before the altar, and reads the history of Abraham when he sent out his servant Eleazar to seek a wife for his son Isaac.[1] When he has read a verse aloud, several children appointed for the purpose translate it into the language of the country, and repeat it with ceremonies and beautiful chants. This is considered to be a particular honour, and the children take much trouble to merit by industry such a distinction.

Even the little children wear Taleth in the synagogue during divine service; but out of the synagogue there are even grown up people who, as in Kurdistan, wear no Zizith. This is the case in Morocco, as well as in the villages of Algeria; as, in general, this custom is not strictly adhered to. In Africa as well as in Asia the women do not come into the synagogue; they are only present at circumcisions, but there are some old women who attend divine service on festival days. Generally in both parts of the Globe (Asia and Africa) there is very seldom a woman to be found who can read or write; this has reference not only to the Jews, but to all the natives.

The Sabbaths and festival days in Africa, as well as Asia, are very strictly observed and kept sacred by the Jews, not only with respect to divine service, but likewise as to business, amusements &c. During my stay there, I scarcely ever found that business was carried on the Sabbath, or that work of any kind was done, if it was so, it must have been in a case of extreme necessity. In many respects, however, they are not so strict in the observance of the laws as we are in Europe; for instance, in the baking of the Easter cake, and in the indulgence of many dishes and drinks. Thus the Jews there eat rice, peas, beans &c. and drink rum at the Easter festival.

[1] Genesis c. XXIV. 1—8.

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The customs and preparations on Easter eve take place in the same way as with us in Europe; only in Africa they have the following custom, that at the first portion of the reading concerning the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt, one of the family circle gets up, and holds the dish, containing the food in remembrance of those times, over the head of each person present for some moments; and if any one is omitted on this occasion, he considers himself very unfortunate. This custom is found particularly in Tunis, while the educated in Algeria do not know it. In Asia another good custom has been introduced at this festival. A boy is habited completely in the garb of a pilgrim. With a pilgrims staff in his hand, and a wallet with bread on his shoulders, he enters the assembled family circle before the reading commences. The master of the house then asks the boy: „Whence dost thou come, oh Pilgrim?“ — „From Mizrajim!“ answers the boy. — „Art thou delivered from the bonds of slavery?“ is the next question. — The boy replies: „Yes, I am free and delivered.“ — „And where goest thou?“ is then asked .„To Jerushalajim,“ answers the pilgrim. Amid great rejoicing and friendly greeting those present then begin the Hagada. The reading of this takes place on the first Easter night in the Hebrew language, and the second night in the language of the country: everywhere the women take part in it. Festive songs and hymns are sung, and the whole ceremony makes not only an agreeable, but likewise a very edifying and inspiring impression. From the third until the sixth day cards are much played, and in this even the Chachamim take part. During the whole of the festival no one thinks of business or work, but the days are spent in religious exercises and in amusements. On the last day of the feast, fresh stems of corn are brought from the field into the houses, and scattered with flowers and fresh green in the rooms, and placed upon the tables, as a symbol of the spring and of the blessing of the new year entering the house. — In Algeria it is the custom to go on this

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night to the oldest Chacham, and receive his blessing. — In Oran they have also a peculiar custom. In the night before the first eve of the festival, which is called Lel-el-Ros, in every family nothing else is eaten but boiled lamb's heads. I could find no other reason for this custom, but that I thought it might be in remembrance of the Karban-Pesach, of the offerings on the evening before the festival. In the last night of the feast called Lel-el-Maimun, no meat at all but only milk food is eaten, and on this evening it is the custom to go to one's acquaintances and relations to sup with them. — In Oran and Morocco, besides the flowers and stems of corn, a dish with gold and jewels is placed upon the table, as a symbol of the wealth and blessing it is hoped the new year may bring into the house. In Tetuan in Morocco a vessel full of water, in which live fish swim about, is likewise placed upon the table. The visits which are paid on this last festival night often last until past midnight. When the young people go home, one of them calls out: „Maimun!“ to which another answers: „Misoth!“ and a third „Fertsh Allah!“ — I inquired the meaning of these oft-repeated exclamations, and was told that Maimun and Misoth were the names of two happy persons: and that in remembrance of them, wishing each other a similar happiness, they called out to each other their names; and the third exclamation: „Fertsh Allah!“ emplied „God give happiness.“

The feast *Shewuoth* (feast of weeks) has likewise its peculiar customs. On the first evening the families assemble in their houses, and by turns one or another of them reads aloud a portion of the Thora &c., and during the pauses, coffee and other refreshments are handed round. In the morning, as already mentioned, they go to the synagogue to pray.

On the Tissa-Beaw (destruction of the temple), all assemble in the evening in the synagogue, where the Kinoth (lamentations of Jeremiah) and other appropriate lessons are read aloud by the Chacham. After the reading is finished, the history of Chana and her seven sons, who were

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compelled to apostatize, and were therefore killed, is read aloud just as it is written in the Medrash Rabba, in the language of the country. The Chacham and the community sing alternately verse by verse different funeral dirges. In Kurdistan they have another custom. The Chacham gets up and says: „My brethren, to-day it is so many years since our holy temple was destroyed, and we have not yet been able to rebuild it!“ At these words all the lights are extinguished, and all throw themselves down with their faces to the earth, and begin to lament and weep. Then one light is lighted, and with songs of lamentation the history of Chana is read aloud in the Kurdish language. In the morning all again assemble in the synagogue, and in many places the men put on their Tephilim on this occasion; the customary prayers are recited, and the Kinoth is delivered; the Pentateuch is covered with black, and ashes are strewn. At the reading of the Hafthora, each verse is translated into the language of the country, and commented on, at which songs of lamentation are sung.

At the feast of *Rosh-ha-Shana* (New Year's feast) all assemble in the synagogue, where prayers are said, and several Piutim are spoken. The reading of the Pentateuch takes place as in Europe; only in Asia and Africa all remain quiet at the sounding of the Shofar, and listen motionless to the sounds of the symbolic trumpet. Divine service is closed in the forenoon with the Musaph-prayer.

On the feast of Aerew-Jom-Kipur (the day before the feast of atonement) one finds in Asia and Africa the use of the Kaparoth in some places very strictly, but in other places not so rigidly observed. In the afternoon of this day the vesper prayer is recited in the synagogue, and the ceremony of the Malkot is performed as with us. In Persia this custom is observed according to the description of the Talmudist in the Messechet Sanhedrin. The person whose turn it is, bares himself to the waist, leans against one of the pillars, and receives his 39 regular hard blows with the Malka, after which he goes into the Tewilla (cold bath).

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When it came to my turn, I refused to comply with this custom, and said: „My brethren, I, as an European, shall not submit to these blows, for in my country, another custom is followed: I will not allow myself to be flogged before the day of atonement, as I might become ill from it.“ They laughed at me, disputed for a short time about the matter, and then left me unmolested. — In the morning and evening they go to the synagogue, and many of them on that occasion, put on white garments. Morning service lasts until midday, and then they go home for two hours. Afternoon service continues till near evening. This feast day is very strictly observed.

The feast of *Sukoth* (feast of tabernacles) is also very rigidly kept, and they only eat under the shade of green boughs; almost every one has Lulaw (branches of palm trees), and Ethrok (fruit of Hadar). The feast is celebrated with many solemnities and amusements.

The night before the festival of *Hosheina Raba,* all assemble at home in the family circle, and read as in Europe. In Tripolis between each part, Selichot is spoken, and the Shofar is sounded; much coffee is drunk on the occasion. In the morning they all go to the synagogue, pray, and repeat the Hosheinot. Afterwards every one takes his Hosheina with him, and they strike each other with the Hosheina over the shoulders. Neither rank nor station is on this occasion taken into consideration; the women do it also, and each considers the blows with the Hosheina as an honour.

At the *Simchat-Thora* (joy for the law) in many places the Hakafoth is only performed once. One of the community places himself with the Pentateuch at the altar, and the assembly go round him seven times to the singing of the appointed Piutim.

The *Chanoka* (remembrance of the Macabeans) and *Purim* (feast of Esther) are celebrated as in Europe.

I carefully observed the customs at divine service and at the ceremonies of the festivals, in order as they are quite unknown here, to be able to relate and explain them.

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At *the birth of a boy* the following customs are observed: From the day of birth until that of circumcision, an entertainment is given each evening in the house, to which acquaintances and relations are invited. That on the first night is called Seudad Eliahu (repast of Elijah); that on the last night before the circumcision is called Bilada; and all the relations and friends assemble. The Chachamim read for about two hours, after which the entertainment commences from the conclusion of which till towards morning the time is spent in reading, chanting etc. On the morning of the eighth day the circumcision takes place in the synagogue with great solemnities.

At *the birth of a girl* on the evening before the eighth day the Chachamim, relations and friends are invited to an entertainment. The new born child in a little cradle is presented to the first Chacham, who gives it to the second, and the second to the third, and thus it goes on until the child has passed through every hand. Three times is this ceremony repeated amid the singing of Piutim, and each time that those present receive the cradle with the child in their hands, they place in it a piece of money, and this money is destined for the midwife.

The *Barmizwa* (confirmation) is celebrated in the following manner: When a boy is thirteen years of age, some weeks previously the Chacham teaches him an address. On the Sabbath before the Barmizwa, called Tephilim (phylacteries), the relations are invited to an entertainment which lasts until Sunday morning. On the afternoon of this day, the women, dressed in their festive attire, go to all the friends and acquaintances, as well as to the schoolfellows of the boy, and invite them to the feast. When all are assembled, a barber is sent for, who shaves the head of the boy to be confirmed, as well as the heads of his schoolfellows, and every guest at the feast contributes a piece of money, which is given to the barber. After this a merry meal takes place, which often lasts until morning. On Monday morning the synagogue is festively decorated, and the

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Chacham with the teacher goes to the boy's house, and adorns him in Taled and Tephilim, and then he is taken with his schoolfellows in procession with singing and bearing of lights to the synagogue. There, during divine service, as soon as the Pentateuch is brought out, the boy is called forward with his father and some near relation; the Chacham bestows on him his blessing, the boy then delivers his address, and the father and relations bestow alms on the poor. When the ceremony is concluded, all present congratulate the boy, and accompany him home, where again an entertainment is prepared. The boy, still arrayed in his Taled and Tephilim, then proceeds, accompanied by his schoolfellows, to all his different female relations to make a visit and each of them undoes a fold of his Tephilim and makes him a present of a piece of money. When all the visits are paid, the boy returns home, lays aside his Taled and Tephilim, and in the afternoon takes a walk with his companions, on which occasion all the money he has received is expended. In the evening, the relations and friends assemble again at the house of the parents of the boy to an entertainment, which lasts until the next morning, and concludes the ceremony. Girls are not confirmed, except in some towns of Algeria, where the custom is now being adopted.

At *marriages*, the following ceremonies take place. The Sabbath before the wedding is observed very solemnly. The evening before the marriage, the relations and friends and the Chachamim assemble in the house of the bride. In the middle of the courtyard is placed a decorated chair, and beside it several other chairs. The Chachamim, the parents and relations then conduct the bride, preceded by lights, to the chair, in which she seats herself. At her side are seated the Chachamim, and then in turn her parents and those of the guests who are entitled to the greatest honour. This takes place amid the singing of Piutim, and lasts about two hours; after which the bride is reconducted to the house, and the company seperates. On the wedding

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morning the bridegroom with his friends and the bride with her companions go to the bath. In the afternoon, after the bridegroom has dressed himself in his festive attire and Taled, he is conducted by the Chachamim and those belonging to him to the synagogue, where vesper prayer is recited, after which they conduct him home. At the marriage ceremony a high decorated chair is placed in the courtyard, to which the Chachamim and parents conduct the bride veiled. When she has seated herself in the chair, the bridegroom advances to her right side, the Chacham intolds the young couple in the Taled of the bridegroom, and pronounces the Berachot; after which he gives the wedding rings to the bride and bridegroom. The songs of the assembled guests add to the impression made by the ceremony. The Ketuba (marriage contract) is then read aloud, and the marriage is finished. When it is concluded, the young pair are conducted to the house, the company separates to reassemble again in the evening for an entertainment. While this is going on, the young couple are conducted into a separate room and left alone. After some time the bridegroom returns to the company, and, if in all things his wife answers his expectations he receives the congratulations of the relations and assembled guests. Then at the merry meal, amid music and singing, the night is spent until break of day. The young couple remain in the parents house for seven days after the marriage, and each evening these entertainments are repeated. On the Sabbath after the wedding the bridegroom, amid songs, and accompanied by many persons, repairs to the synagogue: the bride remains at home. All the relations are summoned, and at the reading of the lesson for the week, they and the bridegroom bestow considerable gifts on the Chachamim and the poor. With songs, and accompanied by the same train as before, the bridegroom returns to the house of the bride, where one last grand feast is prepared, which with joy and merry making lasts until the following morning.

In Persia they have another custom. There likewise for seven days after the wedding the Chachamim, relations,

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and friends assemble in the bride's house. The young couple, richly dressed, are seated on a dais erected on one side of the room, and two gilded wax lights burn beside them. For some hours the guests sing Piutim, partake of a meal, and then separate; and this is repeated every day for the rest of the week.

At *funerals*, an old biblical custom is followed which is mentioned in Jeremiah. c. IX. 17, 18. As soon as any one dies, the Mekononot (hired female mourners) are called, who seat themselves near the dead, and begin to chant in a whining voice the songs of lamentation in the language of the country. The ceremonies used are those mentioned in the Talmud, Messechet Moed Kattan. The women related to the deceased utter loud wailing cries, tear their hair, and scratch their faces until the blood comes, which is expressly forbidden by Moses in Deuteronomy c. XIV. 1; and Leviticus c. XXI. 5. The Chachamim have given themselves much trouble to put aside this custom, but have not yet succeeded. The songs of lamentation are regulated by the rank of the deceased, and at each funeral different songs are used. — In Persia the Chachamim sing the songs of lamentation, but there the women neither tear their hair nor disfigure their faces. — This lasts for about three hours, after which the body is buried. — In Persia the songs of lamentation only commence after the body has been prepared for interment; but in Africa these preparations are made afterwards. In proceeding to the burial ground the Chachamim walk first, singing the first twelve verses of the 91st Psalm. In the whole of Asia and Africa the body is not clothed in the Taled. — In Morocco it is even customary for the women and children related to the deceased to assemble often, long after the funeral has taken place, to join in songs of lamentation for the dead, and to tear their hair.[1]

[1] Rabbi Petachia, p. 169 mentions just such a custom as existing in the country of Kasria, where mothers teach their daughters the songs of lamentation. This appears to be an old custom; for even Jeremiah c. IX. 17. 18. mentions it.

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After having described these customs from birth to death, I conclude with the words of Salomon, who says in Ecclesiastes c. VII, 1. 2: „A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of birth. It is better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men, and the living will lay it to his heart.“ And fervently do I wish that the words of the Prophet Isaiah may be fulfilled which are written Isaiah XXV, 8. 9: „He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall be taken away from off all the earth; for the Lord hath spoken it. And it shall be said in that day, 'Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord: we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation!'“

The Portuguese conquests and discoveries with respect to the Jews. [1]

By Dr. M. Kayserling.

João I, Henry the Navigator, Alfonzo the African, João de Menezes, Azambuja, Vasco de Gama, Columbus, Albuquerque, Cabral, Cortez, Pizarro — what names are these of mighty men! What histories and heroic deeds are associated with these adventurers and conquerors! With what rapture and delight does the boy listen to the relation of their discoveries and their battles by sea and by land. No people in Europe was animated by such a spirit of enterprise as the Portuguese; to the discoveries of their Infants and admirals they owe their power, and Portugal acquired

[1] In conclusion we give the following well written article by Dr. *M. Kayserling*, which is to be found in *Frankel's „Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judenthums“*, Decembre 1858.

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possessions in the greatness of which the world forgot the little mother country, and she, at last, forgot herself.

Had these glorious and heroic mean, had the discoveries which raised the little spot on the sea coast into a mighty power, no relation with *that* people, who now, as then, were scattered everywhere, and in those times nowhere found a home? In the long long chain which Portuguese navigators laid round the coast of Africa, the last golden ring of which remained fixed in the paradise of India, in this chain did not the Jews also form a link? Nobody has most likely ever doubted this, and yet no one has attempted to bring these events, which, apparently, are placed so far *from* the history of the Jews, into connection *with* the Jews and their history. But what advantage from such a treatment of general history arises to Jewish science, how, by such explanations, the world must clearly see that the Jews have not been created merely for suffering and endurance, but likewise everywhere and under all circumstances have proved themselves active and useful, helpful and efficient, needs no further discussion.

With this object I wish in these pages to endeavour to treat and illustrate the Portuguese discoveries and conquests with respect to the Jews.

Under João I the discoveries and conquests had their beginning on African soil. Ceuta, the first strong city of Mauritania, splendid and populous, was taken, — that which had been for many years the object of the longing wishes of the Portuguese Infants, thirsting for deeds of glory, was attained. Ceuta was the key to the lands of Islam, the terror of the Mahomedans, and the point of outlet for further conquests on the African coast. At the storming of this town, among those with the Armada, at whose departure all Lisbon flocked to the harbour, were likewise — Jews. One of these Jewish sailors fell in action.[1]

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[1] *Chronica do Conde D. Pedro*, in the *Collecção de livros Ineditos de Historia Portugueza (Lisboa 1790) I. fol. 259: Moreo hum Judeo,*

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Some years later Larash (El Araish) was taken. On this occasion the Portuguese took as prisoners of war four Moors, and two Jews.[1]

The youthful Infant Henry, surnamed by history „the Navigator and Geographer", assisted in person at these first African campaigns. To render himself and his native land illustrious by the discoveries of new countries, to obtain larger possessions for Portugal, to furnish new resources and advantages for trade, — this was the noble aim which the enlightened navigator had set before himself. With enthusiasm, perseverance, and energy he devoted himself to astronomy; — and Jews from their experience and knowledge gave the first assistance to his undertaking. From Jews he received the first statements of the places traversed by them in the course of their commercial transactions, — places hitherto unknown to him, — and from their accounts his supposition amounted to certainty, that a communication between Europe and India could be found; and every Jewish traveller coming from a far country found the kindest reception at the observatory of this courteous prince.

The island of Madeira with its unchanging spring, the home of the ancestor of the celebrated Belmonte, was discovered by him.[2]

Storms and revolts at home withdrew for a time the Portuguese from these undertakings.

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que era com os nossos etc. The Jews in Portugal were thus early engaged in sea service, and the statement of Shalshelet Hakabbala that Sal. Jachia was a leader of horsemen thus gains belief; and, in fact, for no other reason has this statement been declared a „mere fable", but only because it was related by the „*Lügenkette*" (set of liars). Would any one believe Shalshelet if he, for instance, stated that under Alphonzo VII, and Alphonzo VIII of Castille Jews took part in the treaties of the Cortes, — which every one knows at the present day represented our chambers of Deputies — and even subscribed the Fueros?

1 *Chronica do Conde D. Pedro 405.*

2 Compare my Sephardin: *Romantische Poesien der Juden in Spanien,* 289. Leipzig 1859.

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Alfonzo V lived and was active in Africa; his spirit was there when even he was in person in Portugal. He turned all his activity and the best resources of the country to Moorish Africa, and obtained for himself the surname of „the African."

João II took greater interest in the discoveries along the west coast of Africa than in the conquests. Certainly with the tribute money which the banished Jews from Spain were obliged to pay, he wished to continue the campaigns which his father had so gloriously led; at least, he gave this as a reason when he was reproached by some in council, that it was not pious or christian like to receive foreign Jews into the country for the sake of money and gain. From the Jews passing over the frontier enormous sums flowed into the state treasury. João did not take the field, nor did his fleet sail towards the coast of Africa; but the little children torn by force from the unhappy Jews were sent to those islands which had been so recently discovered, whose only inhabitants were not human beings, but lizards and crocodiles. The cruzades so artfully taken from the Jews were found after the death of João perfect and untouched in the public treasury; for his undertaking against Africa had not been carried out.

By the zeal with which João, the grasping and avaricious monarch, betook himself to the work of discovery, he made powerful preparations for his successor, who, by the discoveries in Africa, has secured for himself and Portugal undying fame. By Jews he caused investigations to be made on land, in order to find out by their clever research and their sharpsighted wisdom the means of being able to steer with greater safety on the boundless element, and to find with greater certainty under an unknown sky the dark but eagerly sought for goal.[1]

João sent a knight of his court, Pedro de Cavilhão, to Jerusalem, in order to make minute inquiries there relative

[1] Schäfer, History of Portugal (Hamburg 1850) III. 165.

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to the Priest-King John. Cavilhão sought through Calicut, Goa, and the chief towns of India; and at last, having arrived at Sofala, was, without having obtained his object, on the point of returning to Portugal, when he ascertained at Cairo the arrival of two Jews from his country. These men were Joseph of Lamego,[1] by trade a shoemaker, and Rabbi Abraham of Beja.[2] They delivered (1487) to the knight

[1] So called after his birthplace or probable place of residence Lamego. A word respecting the book of the oldest Cortes *(Cortes de Lamego)*, which was transferred to this town, may here opportunely find its place, particularly as the mistaken opinion, founded on ignorance, still exists, that the history and law-books of the Portuguese are generally silent respecting the Jews. In these Cortes §. 12 thus treats of the Jews: „*Qui non sunt de Mauris et de infidelibus Judeis, sed Portugalenses, qui liberaverint personam Regis, aut ejus perdonem (?)* †) *aut ejus filium, vel generum in bello, sint Nobiles.*“ For centuries the assembly was considered to have taken place, and the resolutions that were passed thereupon were naturally considered legal. The learned chancellor Antonio do Carmo Velho de Barboza, in his „*Exame critico das Cortes de Lamego*“ (Porto 1845) was the first to prove in a decisive manner that these Cortes did not exist, and that the „*Libro de Cortes*“ preserved in three different documents, was forged and interpolated, and only appeared in the 17th century, perhaps at the same time with some letters of Spanish Jews. It is an historical fact, and Barboza has forgotten to mention it, that the position of the Jews at that time in which the Cortes were held at Lamego, was not such that the passage cited against them should have been published. This passage was inserted in order that it should appear ancient; for the fabricator could not imagine that the Jews, who in his century were banished and burnt, could once have lived under a happier star in Portugal.

[2] Barros, Mariz, Faria and others call him Abraham de Beja, Castanhed: *Morador em Beja.* Schäfer simply calls him Rabbi Abraham. l. c. III. 155.

Barros, Asia (Lisboa 1778) Dec. 1. Lib. 3. C. 5: E estando pera se vir a este Reyno com recado destas cousas que tinha sabido, soube que andavam alli dous Judeos de Hespanha em sua busca, com os quaes se vio mui secretamente, a hum chamauam Rabi Habrão, natural de Béja — Castanhed: Morador em Béja — e a outro Josepe,

†) Pendo, a Portuguese word with Latin termination: *pendão*, flag or leader.

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letters from his king. Joseph, who formerly had been in Bagdad, and who on his return had related to the monarch all that he had heard there about Ormuz, the world renowned mart of the spices and drugs of India, had been commanded by the king, in company with the aforesaid Rabbi Abraham, to search for the wandering Cavilhão, and to deliver to him the injunction, that he should give Joseph a report of the success of his mission, but that he himself should travel with the Rabbi Abraham to Ormuz, in order to make himself there acquainted with the conditions of India. Cavilhão rendered punctual obedience to João's orders: he travelled with the Rabbi to Ormuz, and by a caravan proceeding to Aleppo sent Joseph back to Portugal,[1]

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capateiro de Lamego; o qual Josepe havia pouco tempo que viera daquellas partes ; e como soube ça no Reyno o grande desejo que el Rey tinha da informação das cousas da India, foi-lho dar conta como estivera em a cidade de Babylonia, a que ora chamam Bagodad, situada no rio Eufrates, e que alli ouvira fallar do trato da Ileha chamada Ormuz, que estava na boca da mar da Persia, em a qual havia huma Cidade a mais celebre de todas aquellas partes, por a elle concorrerem todalas especiarias e riquezas da India, as quaes per cafilas de camelos vinham ter as Cidades de Aleppo e Damasco. El Rey, ao tempo que soube estas, e outras cousas deste Judeo era ja Pero de Covilhão partido, ordenou se o mandar em busca delle, e assi o outro chamado R. Habrão, o Josepe pera lhe trazer recado das cartas, que per elles mandaua a Pero de Covilhão, e Habrão pera ir com elle ver a Ilha de Ormuz e dahi se informar das cousas da India. Em as quaes cantar El Rey encommendaua muito a Pero de Covilhão que se ainda não tinha achado o Preste João, que não receasse o trabalho té se ver com elle e lhe dar sua carta e recado; e que em quanto a esto fosse, per aquello Judeo Josepe lhe escrevesse tudo o que tinha e sabido . . . .

[1] Schäfer, l. c. III. 155, in his description suddenly ceases to mention Joseph, and lets Abraham, instead of Joseph return to Portugal with the statements. Garcia de Resende, *Chronica del Rey D. Joam II (Lisboa 1752)*, Fol. 29b. without thinking of the Jews, concludes his account with the words: „*Cavilhão . . . . não ousu tornar.*“ In accordance with Portuguese sources of information, Barrios likewise speaks of these Jews. In his *Historia Universal Judayco*, 7, he says: „*El Rey Don Juan Segundo de Portugal por el leal advitrio de los Judios,*

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where, some time afterwards, he was rejoined by his travelling companion Abraham, who had been sent out with him by the king. They had returned; — but it was only to wander forth to Africa in company with other brethren of their faith banished by João.

Just as Joseph the shoemaker and Abraham the Rabbi had been by their travels of service to the king in his intention of subduing foreign countries to the rule of his sceptre, other Jews were engaged at home in mathematical researches, which being afterwards applied to later discoveries, were found to be of no inconsiderable service.

In order to lessen the danger of losing one's self far from the coast on an unknown sea, João gave commands to the most celebrated mathematicians of the kingdom, that they should consult together to contrive the means of being able with greater certainty to show the course the ship should keep in the open sea, and be able to find out where they were, if they should happen to be far from a known coast. After great deliberation and research, the use of the astrolabe, which until then had only been in requisition for astronomical purposes, was applied to navigation; and this discovery is for the greater part, if not entirely, the work of Portuguese Jews.

With Martin Behaim, the celebrated knight and navigator from Nuremberg, sat also in consultation, together with a Moses and an Abraham, on account of his mathematical acquirements called Rabbi Abraham Estrolico [1] (the astro-

descubrio à la India Oriental, y por esso hizo confiança de Rabi Abraham de Beja y de Joseph Zarpatero de Lamego, quando los embio por tierra à las orillas del Mar Roxo, de donde Pedro de Covillam se embarco com Rabi Abraham para Hormuz, y Joseph de Lamego torno al referido Rey con el aviso de lo que hasta entonces se havia descubierto." — After Barrios Basnage also, *Histoire des Juifs*, IX. 729. It is not improbable that one of the Jews named Abraham, mentioned in the course of this treatise as being near Safi or Azamor, may have been this same Abraham de Beja.

[1] Many of our readers may, at the mention of this Abraham Estrolico, be reminded of R. Abraham Zacuto, the author of „Juchasin", and

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loger), — according to a decree given in Torres Vedras June 9th 1493, this last mentioned Rabbi was made by the king to pay 10 gold Espardims;[1] — likewise Joseph and Rodrigo, the Jewish physicians in ordinary to João. Joseph and Rodrigo, who were likewise engaged in the making of the terrestrial globe for the aforesaid Pedro de Cavilhão,[2] have acquired importance in the history of Portuguese discoveries. Who knows but for the dissuasion of Joseph, if the Genoese discoverer of the new world would not have prevailed upon the king — who found in the words of the noble Columbus „more pride and conceit, than truth and certainty" — to have credited his assertions, and to have granted him a few ships in order to attempt the discovery of his island? But João referred him, as Barros[3] relates,

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the well known astrologer of Manuel; of him we will speak another time. But as we are not quite sure if Zacuto who certainly was already in Portugal in 1493, was likewise in the service of João, I feel no hesitation in considering this Abraham as a different person from Zacuto. In fact, from the 70th year of the 15th century, very many learned Jews bearing only the name of Abraham, have appeared in the course of the Portuguese history. An Abram Judai *fisyquo e peliguem* (a furrior?) lived in Elvas and was appointed by Alfonzo V, July 27th 1475 to be Rabbi of his community. Another is mentioned in 1482 as an inhabitant of Braganza. A third in 1484 as Rabbi in Lisbon; and a fourth as a physician in Braganza, Aveiro, and Setubal.

1 *Torre do Tombo, Corp. Chronic. Pars 1. Mac. 2. Doc.* 18 in the *Memor. d. litteratur. Portugueza (Lisboa 1812) VIII, 166. d. Espardim* is a gold coin of the value of 300 reis.

2 Mariz, Dial. IV. Cap. X. p. 315.

3 *Barros, Asia, Dec. 1. L. 3. C. 11: Com tudo a força de suas importunações, mandou que estivesse com D. Diego Ortiz, Bispo di Ceuta e com maestre Rodrigo e maestre Joseph, a quem elle commetia estas cousas da Cosmografia e seus descubrimentos, e todos nouveram por vaidade as palavras de christovão Colom por todo ser fundado em imaginações e cousas de Ilha Cypango de Marco Paulo....* Likewise compare Murr diplomatic history of the Portuguese knight Martin Behaim (Nuremberg 1778) 61 ff. D. Pedro de Meneses, count of Villa-Real, likewise advised the king „not to listen to the dreams of Columbus", and appealed at the same time to Joseph and Rodrigo.

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to the Bishop of Ceuta, and to his learned men Joseph and Rodrigo, to whom he left it to investigate such-like cosmographic discoveries. Joseph and Rodrigo considered the request of Columbus to be foolish, and were of opinion that it was all founded upon his discontent respecting the island Cipango of Marco Polo. The navigator was dismissed with a refusal, and — the neighbouring country reaped the fruit of his great discoveries.

The application of the astrolabe to the purposes of navigation is the work of the Jews.[1] How important this invention became for all later discoveries it is not in our power to judge. It lessened the difficulties, and facilitated the trade of the Portuguese with the African tribes: Navigation thereby made rapid and powerful progress, and — not João, but Joseph and Rodrigo have obtained for themselves for ever a place of honour in history, and science always remembers them with respect, although the king rewarded them with ingratitude, and banished them from the country together with their brethren in the fa h.

In the days of Manuel the Portuguese nation endeavoured to elevate itself, and the enthusiasm for voyages and discoveries seized most powerfully on the most energetic, active, and enterprising men. Vasco de Gama set sail, Diaz joined him, Meneses fought victoriously in Africa, Manuel wished to lead in person an army against the Moors; and the old Azambuja, that subtile limping old man, reaped on Moorish soil the most glorious triumphs of victory.

His triumphs and conquests we will now follow; and will next proceed with him to the ancient coasting town of Safi.

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[1] *Barros, l. c. Dec. 1. L. 4. Cap. 2. Telles. Sylvius, De Rebus gestis Joannis II. (Hagae 1712), 99: Ut minore cum errandi periculo ignotum mare navigari posset, Roderico et Josepho, medicis suis, nec non Martino Bohemo, ea aetate peritissimis mathematicis, iniunxit Joannes II. etc. Matthaei, De insulis novi orbis (Francof. 1590), 80: ... praeclaro sano invento ad usum rei maritimae opera peritissimorum mathematicorum Rotheri et Josephi etc. Maffei, Histor. Indicar. (Venet.) 51.*

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This town, which is called by the Moors Azafi, and, according to the accounts of Arabian writers, was built by the natives in times of remote antiquity, consisted at the time when Azambuja approached it of many scattered villages and hamlets, and had more than 4000 dwellings, of which 400 were inhabited by Jews.[1] Through the Jewish population, Safi had become an important place of trade, and Christian, as well as Moorish merchants, imported by land and by water the most different productions and goods: gold and silver, honey, wax, butter and skins. The Portuguese took advantage of disputes in the family of the Regent of Morocco, and with the assistance of the Jews succeeded in getting the family into their power.

Accompanied by only a few persons, Azambuja proceeded to Safi. Scarcely had he entered the place, when he was informed by a Jew living there, a certain Rabbi Abraham, who served him as interpreter,[2] that some of the inhabitants of the town were conspiring against the life of him, who had come as a mediator among them. This assertion of the Rabbi was confirmed by others, so that the general in the moment of danger thought it expedient to return for the present to Castello-Real, from whence he came. On the 6th August 1507, furnished with new instructions from his king he again entered Safi, accompanied by Garcia de Melo, who had been appointed to assist him. But

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[1] *Damião de Goes, Chronica do Rei D. Manuel (Lisboa 1749), Fol. 186: allem de quatro centas casas que nella auia de Judeus. Leo Africanus, De totius Africae descriptione (Tiguri 1559), 120* believes: „*Azaphi . . . quamplurimos olim habuit Judaeos, qui et varias exercebant artes.*

[2] *Dam. de Goes, l. c. 187: porque soube per via do hum Judeu, per nome Rabi Abrahão que era sua lingoa que alguns dos dacidade andauam pera o matar, o que de feito era verdade* &c. Likewise *Osorius, De rebus Emmanuelis (Coloniae 1597), 138b: Ibi vero cum indicio Abrahami Judaei cognovisset* &c. *Ribeiro dos Santos* may also have had in his mind the Abraham in question when he wrote *Memor. d. litt. Portugueza, VIII. 223*: „*Outro Abraham feito Rabi dos Judeos de Çafim.*“

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now none of the contending parties would enter into any negociation with Azambuja. Azambuja reflected on the means of subduing the town to the rule of the Portuguese sceptre, and devised one as ignoble as it wat efficacious: — he sowed dissension, as the chronicler expresses himself, between the two chiefs of the parties who were waging war against each other, excited mutual distrust, and thus, by artifice, took possession of the town.

Garcia de Melo, Azambuja's companion and attendant, lay ill in bed; a Jewish doctor, who had access to both the contending chiefs, was summoned from the town to attend him. The Portuguese generals sought to win him over to their purpose, and the Jew allowed himself to be used as a mediator. They induced him to deliver letters to each of the two leaders, but in such manner that the one should know nothing of the letter of the other. Both were informed that their lives were in danger from their opponents; both were advised to intrust themselves to the Portuguese generals; and to each was the assurance given, that he, as a vassal of Manuel, should govern in conjunction with the governor named by the king. No one but those persons engaged in this serious game knew of this strategetic artifice. As often as the doctor visited the still suffering de Melo, he placed his hand under the coverlet of the bed as if to feel the pulse of his patient; but, in reality, instead of the pulse, he took hold of the letters written by de Melo in the interim, and then retired as quickly as possible. This stratagem succeeded; each of the leaders fell into the snare which had been prepared for him, and — Safi fell.[1]

This manner of conquering towns and gaining countries does not stand alone in history; in every war similar cases occur, and Portuguese and French, German and English have no scruples of conscience in opening a way in wartime by cunning artifice, and in making cunning and violence pass for military science and military law. Yet but few

[1] *Dam. de Goes l. c. 188, Osorius l. c. 139 a.*

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examples can be cited where Jews, who are always and everywhere the most faithful subjects of their ruler, have been induced to side with the enemy. The Jewish doctor had the welfare of his fellow-citizens and of his brethren in view; he wished to deliver the town from tyrants, and hoped that the Portuguese would take off the yoke which pressed heavily on all the inhabitants. Did he see his hopes fulfilled? History is silent on this point; and yet we believe ourselves justified in conjecturing that he did.

As long as Safi stood under Portuguese rule, the Jews of this town had equal rights and paid the same taxes as the other inhabitants.

Safi remained for a long time the seat of war. The more important it was for the Portuguese to possess this rich commercial [1] town, on account if its extensive trade, from which the Jews as well as the Christians and Moors derived very rich profits, the more often did the Moors make the attempt to wrest it from them. After its capture, the aged Azambuja was appointed sole Governor; but he did not succeed in keeping the rebellious Moors in subjection. In 1511 the whole province of Duccala, the capital of which is the often mentioned Safi, rose up against the foreign conquerors; an army of 5000 cavalry and 600,000 men on foot stood ready for combat. In hurried marches the Portuguese general, the clever Atayde advanced against Safi. He had the gates closed, and gave most positive commands to the sentinels not to allow any human being, whether Moor, Jew, or Christian to depart without especial permission.[2] In a short time Atayde suppressed the revolt, subdued the whole province, and levied a tribute on all the goods imported by the inhabitants whether Moor, Jew, or Christian.

When the inhabitants of Morocco, twenty-eight years

[1] *Dam. de Goes l. c. 291: . . . . . grando trato de mercadorias que nella auia, de que assi os Christiãos como os mouros e Judeus fazião muitos e mui grossos ganhos.*

[2] *Goes l. c. 290: E defender aos porteiros e guardas que Mouro, nem Judeu, nem Christião deixassem sair fora sem seu mandado.*

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later, again took to arms, and desired to shake off the yoke of the stranger, it was a Jewish general who assisted the Portuguese. In the year 1539 the Xarife of Morocco with an army of 100,000 men appeared before Safi; on which occasion one of the Jews, who had been banished from Spain, and had wandered to Fez, gave a brilliant example of Jewish fidelity and Jewish bravery. Samuel Valenciano (Al-Valenci) is the name of this Jewish general. This hero, who on his arrival in Fez[1] had won for himself the love and respect of the reigning monarch of the family of Merines, had before this time, at Ceuta, made his name feared. Later, the Xarifes rose against the Merines, and drove them out of the kingdom. The Princes were deposed, and placed themselves under Portuguese protection. The noble Samuel risked his life and his fortune for the family of the rightful prince; he united with other Alcades who had remained faithful to the Merines, equipped some ships, placed himself at the head of the undertaking, and sailed away to the place where the rebels had caused the Portuguese much damage. Al-Valenci arrived with his ships before Ceuta. He quickly landed his people, waited in the night for a favourable opportunity, and with his little band, for he had not more than 400 men, rushed upon the hostile army, which numbered more than 30,000 warriors. He cut down more than 5000 without losing a single man. Ceuta was struck with terror, and before the morning dawned the Xarife withdrew to Fez.[2] With similar bravery, with mar-

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[1] Samuel is said to have settled later in Azamor.

[2] *Tambien merea ser celebrado la fidelidad y valor de un noble Israelita, llamado Semuel Alualensi, de los desterrados de España: el qual, auiendo passado à Africa fue fauorecido y muy muz amado del Rey de Fez, que en aquel tiempo era de la familia de los Merines. Succedio que los Xarifes se lleuantaron contra los Merines, y los mataron y despojaron del Reyne. Fue tan grande el dolor del grato y fiel Semuel Alualensi, que poniendo su vida, hazienda, y todas sus cosas à manifiesto peligro, se junto con otros Alcaydes criados de los Merines, y armaron algunos nauios, tomando por Capitan al valeroso Alualensi,*

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vellous courage, and rare skill Al-Valenci compelled the enemy encamped before Safi to give way, and raised the siege.[1] Azamor is stated to be the later place of residence of this brave Jewish hero; and to Azamor we will accompany the Portuguese conquerors. Azamor, but a few miles distant from Fez, was next to Safi, the chief town of the province of Duccala. Long before the capture of Safi, by the Portuguese, King Manuel, in order to continue the friendship and peace which João had established with the Moors of Azamor, kept some trustworthy Portuguese in this town. At their instigation, and with the assistance of the Jewish Rabbi there, Rabbi Abraham, in 1512,[2] the inhabitants of Azamor, by letters and treaties, and with the consent of their chief, Mulei Zeyan, submitted themselves to the King of Portugal. Mulei Zeyan, who ruled with the greatest tyranny, had several times violated the contracts with Portugal, and Manuel, therefore, determined in 1513 to conquer Azamor. For this purpose he equipped a fleet of more

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para hir contra los Xarifes, que estauan en aquel tiempo sobre la fortaleza de Cepta, y tenian muy afligidos à los Portugueses vasallos del Rey D. Manuel que la defendian. Llegaron entonces los nauios de nuestro Alualensi al puerto de Cepta, y auiendo desembarcado la gente en tierra, espero tiempo oportuno de la noche, y con qnatocientos Nombres deo sobre el ezercito del Xarife, que eran mas de treynta mil, y mataron mas de cinco mil dellos, sin perder uno solo de los suyos. Luego al otro dia als(z)o el Xarife el cerco y se retiro a Fez. Aboab, Nomologia (Amsterdam 1629) 305 f.

1 *El Tirano Xarife de Marruecos cerco à la ciudad de Safi en el anno de 1539 con cien mil hombres y el valiente Samuel Valenciano Judio de Azamor, y Almirante de guerreros Vergantines, que formo à su costa, socorria à los cercados Portugueses, y con admirable industria, y audicia desbarato à los Mahometanos y descerco a la Ciudad. Barrios, Historia Universal Judayca, 8 f.*

2 *Dam. de Goes l. c. 367: Muito antes da tomada de Çafim por el Rey D. Manuel continuar nas pazes e amiza de etc.* (Compare likewise Schäfer l. c. III, 119, who, like ourselves, translates Goes) . . . *per medo dos quaes (cavallecros) o de hum Rabi mor dos Judeos, per nome Rabi Abraham* (why Schäfer does not mention the Rabbi, we do not know) &c.

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than 400 ships, and conferred the chief command on his nephew D. Jaime, Duke of Braganza. João de Menezes with several of his sons, and many valorous nobles and gentlemen, joined the great expedition.

On the 23rd of August D. Jaime set sail, and in a few days afterwards came in sight of Azamor. This town was not inferior to Safi in size and importance; it carried on a great trade, and had more than 5000 dwellings, 400 of which were inhabited by Jews.[1]

With a considerable military force, Mulei Zeyan, accompanied by his two sons, advanced against the Portuguese; he himself commanded in person. D. Jaime gave the necessary orders to the fleet, disembarked the guns, and in marching order advanced with the whole army against the Moors, who stood prepared in battle army. The struggle began. The Moorish warriors defended themselves with the courage of lions. Suddenly a loud lamentation arose in the town; their brave commander, who not only with his powerful voice, but with the most energetic actions, had inspired his people to battle, the valiant Cide Mansus, had been struck to the earth by a bomb shell. With him all their courage vanished. They rushed from the town, and in such haste, that more than 80 persons were pressed to death at the gates.

Before the morning dawned was heard from the walls of Azamor, which was sunk in deathlike stillness, a voice exclaiming: „Diego Berio! Diego Berio!“ — This cry was addressed to the bravest man of the Portuguese fleet. It was the voice of a friend, of an old acquaintance from his home; it was the cry of the Jew Jacob Adibe, who had been banished from his country. Without delay, Jacob wished to be conducted to the Duke. Diego Berio accompanied his friend. „The city is free!“ With these words Jacob

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[1] *Dam. de Goes l. c. 370: em que aueria mais de cinco mil fogos, sem os dos Judeus, que serião quatrocentos*, therefore not five hundred, as Schäfer l. c. III, 120 asserts.

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fell on his face to the earth. „Azamor is vacated, oh Duke! Azamor is free! I beg for my life, and for the lives of my brethren and fellow-worshippers.“ D. Jaime raised the suppliant Jew, and promised him protection and support. He then himself sank down, and thanked God for his mercy in allowing him to take this great and noble city, without the loss of those who had come forth with him. Jacob Adibe had received the Duke's promise, and joyfully returned to his own people. The cry of victory rose in the camp of the Portuguese; with flying colours the conquerors entered Azamor, and soon did Portuguese banners wave from the gilded domes of the numerous mosques. Armed troops were placed for the protection of the Jews,[1] and while the first grand mass was being celebrated in the Moorish town, the Jews with their property wandered forth to Sale and to Fez, in order that they might no longer live with people who, as the Moorish Christian Johannes believes,[2] had drawn upon themselves the loss of freedom by the most dreadful crime. The taking of Azamor was followed in the next year by the conquest of Fednest, in which the Portuguese found 1600 houses, of which 100 belonged to

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1 *Damião de Goes, l. c. 372: Despyada assi a cidade, sendo ainda noite, hum Judeu de naçam Portuguez, per nome Jacob Adibe, dos que se foram deste regno, que ahi era morador, chamou derriba do muro Diego Berrio etc O Duque fez' alevantar o Judeu . . . . . e ao Judeo concedeo o que lhe pedio etc . . Entrassem na cidade e com elle o corregedor pera defender os Judeus que os nam roubassem . . . . . Osorius, l. c. 254 b: Antiquam dilusesceret Judaeus quidam, nomine Jacobus Adibius, natione Lusitanus, qui cum reliquis Judaeis in exilium pulsus fuerat, e muris Jacobum* (must be Diegum) *Berrium etc.* Barrios likewise mentions Jacob Adibe *(Historia Universal Judayca 13): Jacob Adibi, en Azamor ciudad de Africa dio las alegres nuevas de como la havian desamparado sus temenosos Moradores a Don Jaime Duque de Bragança, sobrino del Rey D. Manuel.*

2 *Leo Africanus l. c. 129: Judaei vero partim Salae et partim Fessae adierunt regionem. Nec puto aliam ob causam id illis a Deo Opt. Max. fuisse illatum, quam propter horrendum illud Sodomitarum crimen, cui ciuium pars maxima tam fuit addicta, ut juvenem vix non corruptum a se dimitterent.*

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the Jews.[1] There they lived as artists, free from all taxes. They only sometimes sent presents to the nobles in order to gain their favour.

Manuel's name in Barbary was soon so feared and honoured, that many Moors, tired of the tyranny of their Masters, became subject to the King of their own free will. Manuel the Happy died. Under João III the might of the Kingdom diminished; the inquisition was introduced — the possession in Africa were again lost.

The Portuguese were driven from Barbary; Jews dwell there up to the present day. Their condition at that time we will discuss on another occasion. To Malabar and its coasts we will next proceed with the Portuguese discoverers; but for the present conclude with the words of a favorite German poet of the day:

Die ganze Welt ist wie ein Buch,
Darin uns aufgeschrieben
In bunten Zeilen manch ein Spruch,
Wie Gott uns treu geblieben.

Conclusion.

With my return to Europe (April 1855) I have to finish the history of my travels. The colours of the picture I have brought before the eyes of my honoured reader may often have been glaring, and gloomy indeed may frequently have appeared to him the conditions with which my book has made him acquainted; — but I have the consciousness of having given my statements according to my own inmost sincere conviction. If perchance I have erred, and everyone is liable to error, it has been unwittingly; *intentionally* I have misrepresented nothing. In the creature I have ever

[1] *Dam. de Goes l. c. 275* corresponding with *Leo Africanus l. c. 70.*

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acknowledged the brother, and have always recognised in him the image of God, as great as may have been the state of degeneracy in which I have often found him. No preconceived opinion, either good or bad, has had any weight or influence in the judgment I have formed of all I have seen and heard.

If here and there I have let the mental condition of my people, the Jews, appear dark, is it necessary for me to give the assurance that my heart was not filled with the less affection for them? Is it necessary for me to give the assurance that I only spoke that which was true, and that in every Jewish soul I recognised a true brother, the son of our father Abraham, the joint-heir to the great sacred treasure, the Thora, which God has confided to the people of Israel, and therefore to each one born of a Jewish mother.

May it be permitted to the traveller, who from far distant countries has returned to the land of his birth — that land, which was the home of his children, whilst their father was seeking his way through deserts and over barren mountains, — may it be permitted to the traveller who is nearly prepared to start again for a long and farther journey likewise to call the attention of his European brethren to a subject connected with their own interests. I address myself first to my brethren in Poland, Russia, and the Moldau. Not one of them can uphold with greater enthusiasm than I do that heavenly treasure, our sacred law, as the sole, highest, and most invaluable gift which truly has the power of establishing and insuring salvation and peace on Earth. No one can lay to heart with deeper and truer conviction than I do that precept: „Day and night thou shalt apply thy heart unto wisdom", — or understand more fully the importance of the law, or adhere to it more entirely with heart and soul.

But just for this very law's sake, we dare not close our ears to general knowledge. „Jofe thalmud thora im derech erez," — knowledge of the law must go hand in hand with general knowledge, as our wise men teach us

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not in vain; let them then *be* our teachers. Let us follow their precepts; we find there is no field of knowledge in which they were not at home, how could it be otherwise? The Thora is no mystery, no priestcraft; it is the decree of the Almighty loving Father and King of the universe; can there then be a corner in this universe where God's law could receive such injury, that His word should not penetrate thereinto? And now less than ever, when everywhere, and even in the countries I have mentioned, the dark spirit of prejudice is yielding, and the Jew, in a more independent position, enters the ranks of those of other creeds — now, when the power of custom can no longer rule so powerfully, and when door and gate are more open than formerly to seductive temptation, ought we to leave the rising generation ignorant of the knowledge which the mind of man has acquired, and expose our children without protection to the voice of false wisdom and education? Ought we not more carefully than ever to furnish them with all and every instruction and refinement, and show them what is godlike and pure therein, and what is error and man's presumption?

„Jofe thalmud thora im derech erez." Thora and education, such must be in this age the inscription on our standards; then will our children be faithful under the banner of their holy faith, just as they remained steadfast when Grecian refinement and learning had the mastery.

How have I come to address this old precept to my brethren, and how have I been induced to do so? — It is because I am a child of those parts where this important precept has been overlooked, and I have felt and do still feel painfully — I avow it openly — the great deficiency which this want has occasioned. I look round in Germany and France; here likewise, where truth and justice were in advance more than half a century, this precept was forgotten, and it was foolishly believed that one could shut one's self up, as it were, against the progress of European enlightenment. — What was the consequence? That every

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one who strove after education was compelled to consider himself as not belonging to the community of Israel; and if in latter days the Lord had not opened the eyes of the faithful Jews, one must have said of these countries: „thora nischkachath", the law was completely forgotten.

But where this principle is cherished, knowledge of the law, adherence to the law, and education grow together in beautiful development out of one soil, and the rising generation remain steadfast to the faith of their fathers, without being inferior to others in mental culture.

May thus our Russian, Polish, and Moldavian brethren learn from Germany and France how much the neglect of the above precept avenges itself, and what glorious fruits spring from its observance! With this wish I take my leave of the Reader.

CHAPTER XLIV.

After having published in 1856 the French edition of my book of travels, I applied to the learned men and Orientalists of France and Germany to give me for the furtherance of the cause of science, some instructions and suggestions for my guidance in my intended second journey, as, on my first journey, the want of such directions was much felt. In consequence of this request, I received the following memoranda, which I here note down, as perhaps they may prove useful to some other traveller, and in order that, in case of my losing the memoranda themselves, I may not be entirely deprived of their benefit.

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A. General questions and propositions from Dr. Munk in Paris.
September 14th 1856.

1. General.

a. To procure a complete written calender used by a tribe, and made by them, or, at least, an exact copy of one, or a full account respecting it in which it is clearly stated whether they reckon according to solar or lunar months, and whether the lunar years are regulated astronomically, or according to the changes of the moon.

b. The specification of an era from which the general calculation of time began.

c. Information concerning festival days, their signification and names.

d. Information respecting prayers; if possible, to procure a book of prayer, or at least some authentic copy of it. A translation of the same, particularly into Arabic. Minute investigation of the writing, and the comparison of it with Phoenician, Samaritan, and ancient and modern Hebrew characters. Inquiry whether traces of the Hebrew language appear in their prayers; for instance, how the name of God is pronounced. Accounts respecting the belief in angels, how they are described; respecting the immortality of the soul; respecting their burial grounds, and the making exact copies of epitaphs.

e. Accounts of other written religious books; to procure the originals, or authentic copies, or translations of the same.

f. Report of any existing knowledge of Biblical writings, whether perfect, abridged, or fragmentary. With respect to this to seek especially for manuscripts, or portions of them.

g. Report respecting customs and habits. Search after written laws, and at what time, and by whom the same were given. If possible, the most detailed information respecting the laws of food and purification; at which time are to be kept particularly in mind the names of animals and plants

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mentioned in the Pentateuch, as well as the precepts of Holy Writ relative to the Nidda.

h. Report respecting marriage laws and customs; if polygamy is customary, if Chaliza and contracts of marriage are introduced. If possible, to procure original letters of divorce, or authentic copies of them.

2. Special.

a. The Bene-Israel. Minute investigation respecting their descent; if they are primitive Jews, or only converted heathen, as, for instance, the Hagarites were. — Have they, besides the known and already mentioned Malabaric Chronicle, other historical writings, of which exact copies may be made? — Detailed information respecting their history etc.

b. The Jews of China. The most detailed possible account.

c. The Jews of Afghanistan. General information; particularly respecting the language for prayer, and the language of the country, their customs etc.

d. The Jews of Persia. General report. To search for manuscripts in Hebrew characters, and for a Persian translation of the Bible. (Those manuscripts found in Paris were written in Lar in the beginning of the 17th century; one is dated from *Dogrun di al jama raba mothuya.*)

e. The Jews of Kurdistan. General report particularly respecting the language used for prayer; — and if there are no writings in existence respecting the translation of the Bible into the language of the country; respecting marriage contracts, and letters of divorce.

f. The Jews of Arabia. General report, particularly respecting Arabic manuscripts in Hebrew characters, — to procure some; especially manuscripts in Yemen, commentaries on the Bible by Rabbi Tarchum of Jerusalem; Kutiath on the Bible. — Detailed report relative to the Bible in Diabekr, which, according to the Jews there, was written by the hand of Ezra, and is mentioned by the traveller in his

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work: „*Cinq années de voyage en Orient*"; also respecting the Pentateuch at Kefil, ascribed to the hand of Ezekiel, and likewise mentioned by the traveller in the same work.

B. Suggestions of Mr. Goldberg in Paris.

July 20th 1856.

a. To undertake a comparison between the names of towns and places in ancient Mesopotamia and Assyria, and to note down these names in Hebrew and Arabic with the greatest accuracy.

b. To search for authentic writings, perfect, as well as fragmentary. They are divided into three classes:

1) *Biblical.* Pentateuchs and ancient Bibles, complete text; some apocryphal books, which existed at the time of the Talmudists: such as Ben Sira, Ben Toglath, Ben Lanath; and perhaps others that are yet unknown, such as some fragments from the writings of Joseph the historian which may perhaps be found in the Targums.
2) *Talmudic.* All Talmudic writings, because there may be among them some still unknown to us; as, for instance, the Talmud Jerushalmi of Seder Kadashim, which was in existence in the time of Maimonides; or the Tosiphta of Bar-Karpara, the fables of the Rabbi Meïr &c.
3) *Geoninic* in the Chaldaic and Arabic writing; this class is very numerous; for instance, the celebrated R. Sharira, his son R. Hai, R. Samuel ben Haphni, R. Hephetz ben Jatzlia &c. Perhaps also writings of the opposers of the Talmudists, i. e. of the Karaites, and opposers of the Bible; for instance, Hevy al Balhi, Ben Sakoni, who lived at the time of Sadia &c.

c. Observation and investigation of natural productions and implements; and minute information respecting their names. Searches after inscriptions, which date perhaps from the most remote periods, and copies of the same.

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C. Remark of Dr. Derenbourg in Paris.

September 16th 1856.

It would be desirable that the traveller should take accurate copies of the Hingaritic inscriptions of which there are many in Zana (Osel of the Bible), and in the vicinity; partly to check those, given by Arnaud, and partly to increase and complete the same.

D. Observation of Mr. Landau in Paris.

September 21th 1856.

Question. If any decided assertion exists in the traditions of the people relative to the time of the coming of the Messiah? — and upon what this assertion is founded? Can it possibly be traced back to the Thora?

E. Remarks of Dr. Jost in Frankfurt on the Maine.

a. Investigations respecting the most ancient Geonim, and their writings.

b. Respecting their position in the Caliphat, particularly relative to the Roshe Galuth.

c. Respecting the most ancient Karaites: Joseph ben Noha, Nissim ben Noha, (Hawandi) Benjamin, Joshejaha, Anan, Levy, Japheth, likewise respecting Japhet ben Said, Joseph hamaor, Jacob harkasni.

d. Respecting the dwelling places, and the number of families of the Karaites.

e. Respecting exact manuscripts of the same, particularly those in Arabic.

f. Respecting the sect of the Shabathai Zeby, their customs, divine service, and writings.

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F. Remarks of Mr. Geiger in Breslau.

June 22nd 1858.

Among ancient printed works there are many which have become disfigured by later additions; the finding of ancient manuscripts would possibly enable us to restore the original text. Among these I include especially the „Targum Jerushalmi", likewise printed under the name of „Jonathan"; the „Mechiltha", the „Sifre" (on the last two books of the Thora). By obtaining such manuscripts, Mr. Benjamin would greatly benefit the cause of science.

About 300 years since the *Arabic commentary* of *Saadia* on the *Pentateuch* was in existence; it might still be found either in Egypt or Persia.

G. Remarks of Dr. C. J. Magnus in Breslau.

June 16th 1858.

1) From the great importance of the *Chaldaic language* and *literature* for the proper understanding of certain parts of the Assyrian and ancient Babylonian cuniform inscriptions, every contribution to our knowledge on these points must be of the greatest interest.

a. If therefore the supposition of Mr. Benjamin is correct, that in the mountains of Kurdistan, even at the present day, Chaldaic (not perhaps the modern Assyrian, — compare *Rödiger* in the *„Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft"*, Vol. 2, p. 77 ff.) is spoken by the Jews dwelling there, it would be desirable that Mr. Benjamin — for want of written books — should have written down by a Jewish learned man a series of literary tradition as accurately as possible; — such as legends, tales, songs &c.; but under all circumstances with the addition of a vocal accentuation, either Hebrew, Assyrian, or Arabic.

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b. For the same reason Mr. Benjamin had better search for good ancient (especially accentuated) manuscripts of the different Targums; — the Jerushalmi Targum on the Pentateuch not to be forgotten.

2) And not less desirable would it be if Mr. Benjamin would turn his attention to *Samaritan literature*, and would take especial trouble to obtain some good manuscripts, not only of the Hebrew Pentateuch in use among the Samaritans written in Samaritan characters, but the Samaritan paraphrase of the same, and other literary works of this people written in the Arabic (or Samaritan?) language, whether exegetical, historical or grammatical.

3) Good manuscript texts, Biblical versions of *Madinchai* and *Maarbai*, and of Ben Asher and Ben Naphtali, as well as simple and plainly-written Masores either in Bible manuscripts or as independent works, especially the book „Ochla Weoohla", would likewise merit the attention of the traveller.

H. Remarks of Mr. Stenzler in Breslau.

Juni 22nd 1858.

For the more accurate knowledge of the Persian language it were important to have particulars of the different dialects spoken in the different provinces. In order to become perfectly conversant with the pronunciation, which can but in adequately be acquired from a grammar, I should propose that a rather long Persian text should be selected, and its pronunciation in the different provinces, according to the various dialects, should be carefully written down in Latin letters.

I. Remarks of Mr. Schmölders.

1) In Jerusalem at the Haram are to be found two large and two small mosques. The one standing in the middle of the space is the celebrated *Omar-Mosque*, which

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is likewise called the Rock-Cathedral. The other large mosque stands in the southern part, and was formerly a Christian church built by Justinian. The two other small mosques join it, and it is a splendid building, and contains seven naves. In the descriptions given by Christian travellers it is often called the *Aksâ*, while some Arabic authors call the Omar-Mosque Aksâ. It would be desirable to ascertain if possible *which* of the two mosques *is* the Aksâ.

2) W. J. Hamilton has given us some accounts respecting the ruins of the former town of Ani (on the Turkish-Russian-Persian boundary, 5 geographical miles east of Kars), which are of the greatest importance to science. Hamilton's statements make a more minute knowledge of these magnificent ruins, the more desirable. Modern travellers do not appear to have visited these ruins at all; therefore a description, as accurate as possible, of these monuments, would be of the greatest value to history as well as art.

3) Layard has drawn attention to the Jezidis dwelling in the vicinity of Mosul. Their peculiar religious opinions and extraordinary worship appear to denote remote heathen antiquity. It would therefore be most interesting, if other travellers would bestow some attention on the religion, doctrines, whorship, and traditions of the Jezidis.

4) D'Herbelot in the „*Bibliothèque Orientale*" has a notice respecting the book „*Gafr*", a work of repute among the Shiite heretics, which would be of great importance in the history of the religion of Islam. Could not (particularly in Kurdistan) more accurate knowledge respecting it, or even the book itself be obtained?

K. Remarks of Mr. R. Gosche.

„*Zeitschrift für allgemeine Erdkunde*", p. 149: We wish from ethnographical considerations, that the traveller would not mind taking the additional trouble of collecting in Luristan among the Tadshicks and in the Persian-Indian frontier countries something belonging to the language, whether songs or little phrases. To Luristan we should wish especially to

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invite his attention; as also to recommend to the warmest sympathy of geographers, and geographical societies the whole enterprise of his journey.

After having received while in France the above instructions, I proceeded to Holland, and first of all to Rotterdam. There I became acquainted with a rich merchant and the superintendent of the community *L. L. Jacobsohn*, who, with the concurrence of other influential men proposed to me that I should undertake a journey to the East-Indies in the Netherlands (Java), in order to establish there a Jewish community; for although a considerable number of our brethren dwell there, no such community is as yet in existence. Although the journey was not too far for me, still the expenses attending it were considerable; so I laid the matter before the Chief-Rabbis of Rotterdam and the Hague, who then, in the following petition, stated the case to the Jewish Court of Commissioners.

The undersigned Chief-Rabbis of the Israelitish chief synagogues at Rotterdam and the Hague have the honour, in consequence of a request addressed to them by Mr. Israel Joseph Benjamin II, relative to the continuation of his travels in the East in the interest of the Israelites, to send the annexed petition to the Chief Court of Commissioners for the affairs of the Israelites in the Netherlands; and this petition shall not only serve to prove their sincere interest in these travels and their probable results, but likewise warmly to bespeak assistance and sympathy in behalf of the above well-known and celebrated traveller in his intended journey to the possessions of the Netherlands in the East Indies.

Rotterdam and the Hague, [illegible] May 1857.

signed R. S. Raphaël,
C. R. of the Jew. Com. at the Hague.

Dr. J. Isaacsohn,
C. R. of Rotterdam.

Th. van Th. Fenarts,
C. R. of the Portuguese Jew. Com. at the Hague.

To the Chief Court of Commissioners
for the affairs of the Israelites in the Netherlands
at the Hague.

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Memorial.

By every one who has turned his attention to the history of the settlement of our fellow-worshippers in the hospitable Netherlands, the close connection and establishment of our religious confederacy in their transatlantic colonies deserves especial consideration. The first settlement of the Israelites in the Netherlands took place almost at the same time with the discovery of America; and hardly had the Netherlands some time afterwards come into possession of the important colonies in the West-Indies, as they were called, when the enterprising spirit of the Jews of the Netherlands took advantage of this circumstance by extending to those parts their commercial transactions; and how this has forwarded the welfare of the communities, and what general benefit it has conferred upon the colonies, is sufficiently well known.

In later years it became a subject of inquiry why the discernment of the learned men and merchants of former days had omitted to take into consideration the advantages which might have been derived from the still more profitable colonies of the East Indies. Perhaps they hesitated on account of their well known devotion to their ancestral faith and religious observances, precepts, and customs, which, they believed, they would be unable to follow in such remote parts. However, from time to time solitary adventurers, mostly from the lower class, went out either as sailors or in some such position; but they were too much wanting in ability and knowledge, and had too little feeling of religion, to think of establishing anything there of a religious character. From the want of moral and religious education in these adventurers, in every effort to establish anything relative to divine service, one could not calculate either on success or consistency; there was no confidence to be placed in them. It was considered useless to expend a sum of any amount for providing even the most necessary arrange-

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ments as a first preparation for the establishment of an Israelitish religious association, for fear of the desecration of those minor usages, which Israelites are bound to observe with particular reverence and care. But within the last few years, when the transmission of means is considerably safer and easier, the wish to plant the ensign of our faith among our fellow-worshippers in those parts has gradually become more earnest. Not only from a scientific and philanthropic, but likewise from a material and commercial motive, and even influenced by pure selfishness, some of our brethren from the Netherlands began to perceive the benefits to be derived from it, and to feel the want of it. These wishes, however, were never carried out, and the matter was never seriously considered nor undertaken with any decision, on account of the difficulty of finding suitable persons capable and worthy of such a mission, to whom it could be intrusted with the prospect of its wished-for success. — But the appearance at this moment in the Netherlands of one who possesses an extensive knowledge of the Israelitish faith and literature, and who has the intention of continuing in a short time those journies in the far East, which he has already made with such extraordinary circumspection and self-sacrifice, in order to add to the discoveries so important for Israelitish history, he has already made, — his presence, besides the interest felt for the success of his most praise-worthy undertaking, and besides the desire to favour his scientific journey, has in a great degree increased that wish to establish a branch of our religious community in those important Eastern transatlantic possessions of the Netherlands. We are likewise animated by the same wish, and are much pleased that this wish for the furtherance of the plan proposed by the noble enterpriser of the journey, according, as it does, so well with science and religion, should have found general willing sympathy and support. As priests, we feel ourselves particularly impelled to forward the wishes of so many members of our community and to offer our assistance towards obtaining the help of our charit-

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able Government. The assistance which is granted from the colonial funds for all public scientific, and moral enterprises, induces us to take the liberty of laying claim to it for the enterprise in question; and we could not allow the present favourable opportunity for the possible fulfilment of the hopes, which many of us have so long cherished, to pass by, without earnestly waging their realisation on our respected Government.

For this purpose we take the liberty of bringing before your consideration, as concisely as possible, our opinions respecting the advantages and the necessity of the object in view; and if they should meet your approbation, it will certainly be easy to your profound discernment to suggest to the respected Government the means for the attainment of our wishes.

1. Our inextinguishable feeling for our religion is an inducement important enough to insure the acceptance of our representation. Why should we stand behind other religious communities who contribute so much to the support and extension of their faith? Certainly, the Jewish religion is not, as others, bound to the duty of making proselytes; but still we ought not to be indifferent when so many of our brethren wander about without any place for religious assembly, so that religion becomes partly, if not quite, extinguished among them. We have therefore considered it as a sacred obligation to embrace the present opportunity, as the means of removing this injurious state of things. We certainly could not request from the respected Government the large expenses necessary for the establishment of a synagogue at Java, until the *certainty* of a successful result existed. — But for the mission which Mr. Benjamin is willing to undertake, without either certain assistance or later reward, a free passage and a moderate compensation could well be allowed: for this small outlay it would certainly be worth while to attempt the improvement of the condition of the Israelites, and it might well be granted to us on the principle of equality with other religious sects.

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2. The furthering of philanthropic purposes might also be taken into account as a motive for a favourable consideration of our statement; for they are promoted above all under religious guidance. Furtherance of religious feeling and extensive of the knowledge of God are indispensable to a great extent to the morality of society. Among the Europeans dwelling in those countries is especially found the necessity of moral influence and powerful remedies for the restraint of human passions, and the checking of immorality. Government itself appears to comprehend this, and to further, in consequence, the establishment of churches, and to watch over their safety. In the colonies the principle of the division between church and state appears not yet to have been brought into play; and the jurisdiction of the Government has a greater control than in the mother country over instruction and morality. Under its superintendence the clerical authorities exercise direct influence on these important interests of society. Has not the Israelitish community, as bearing a not inconsiderable proportion to the population of the Netherlands, a right to demand the same protection too? Is it anything but fair that the avowers of our faith should possess some authority which would watch over the interests of their religion? For want of such a superintendence, is not the fear well grounded that a baneful influence from other churches there may be exercised over the minds of our fellow-worshippers? If they do not degenerate into complete irreligion, they are still exposed to the seductions of missionaries, who, in their artful dealings, leave no means untried. And when the moral feeling craves for its own religion, but this craving can nowhere find means to satisfy itself, then it becomes all the easier to dispose it towards the prevailing religion of the majority. Experience teaches as daily that missionaries everywhere take advantage of the want of religious knowledge; and they are apt to direct to that weak point their cunning artifices. We have nothing to say to the appointment of teachers; this can only be de-

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manded by the community itself. But to regulate this demand, and to waken our fellow-worshippers from this dangerous moral slumber, fairness requires that the Government should weigh all this for the benefit of its subjects, and should finally determine to take advantage of the present opportunity, as the means of endeavouring to improve their wretched condition.

3. But likewise in a philanthropic point of view this undertaking deserves to be recommended. It were superfluous to depict to you the unhappy condition in which most of our fellow-Israelites are to be found. It is not to be concealed that neither industry or public trade flourish among them. The cause of it is not, as is so often asserted, their want of capacity; it is to be found rather in the difficulties which are placed in their way by — yes, we must confess it to our shame — others from among ourselves. — Though we cannot sufficiently acknowledge the noble benevolence of many belonging to other sects, who generously support the furtherance of trade among the Israelites, still, we but too frequently meet with old prejudices, which time alone can surmount. Besides this, the general extension of commercial industry works, on account of the position of the Netherlands, very prejudiciously on the whole of the middleclasses of society, and particularly on the Israelites, among whom, we confess with regret, trade evidently decreases. The necessity for an outlet for the population, which under God's blessing is increasing, is ever becoming a matter of greater importance, and points us to the possessions of the Netherlands beyond seas, with their branches of trade so entirely suited to the characters of the Israelites. However, the Israelites in the Netherlands are so much devoted to their faith, and to their ancestral customs, that they cannot resolve to proceed to a country where no opportunity is given for the exercise of their holy religion. Even the careless desire ardently to rest among their departed brethren; while those who are indifferent on this point, seldom rise in society to a high degree of virtue and

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morality. The establishment of an Israelitish community in those parts is the only way to remove the evil, and to cause the wished-for emigration. Such an undertaking is generally commenced with the careful arrangement of an especial place of burial; by this means the fear with which the Israelite quits Europe — viz, that of an early death — is quieted, and himself encouraged to trust still to God's good Providence. Those too who are troubled with the fear of violating and transgressing religious precepts, see, in the erection of a synagogue, at least the possibility of being able to perform their religious duties aright. The Government at the opening of a colony in their Eastern possessions has very properly already recognised the necessity of an ecclesiastical guidance. In consequence of petitions, which have been presented, ecclesiastical authorities have been invited to join the undertaking of the Government; and most honourably have they performed their duties, the beneficial results of which have distinctly shewn themselves in dark days.

For the Israelites also, their guidance has not been less useful and necessary; but the erection of a synagogue is a first consideration; — this alone can place the Jew in the position of being able to live as a religious Israelite, and therefore it is that the erection of a place of worship has always been the first care of every Israelitish community. In the establishment of a church confederacy in the East Indies, a man of religion, tact, and perseverance is requisite; and, according to our conviction, no one could be more fitted for such an undertaking than the well-known traveller M^r. Benjamin. To this man, who is well acquainted with all the difficulties attending such an undertaking, and prepared to surmount them, it will be comparatively easy to take the necessary precautions, and to make every preparation for an establishment, which will satisfy every scruple of conscience on the part of those interested, and arouse the less opulent Israelites from their carelessness and timidity

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to develope their physical and mental powers in a country where a better future awaits them.

4. Meanwhile, among the more wealthy class of merchants the desire for the realisation of this plan has become particularly urgent. Confidence is the first requisite for the formation of transatlantic commercial connections on such a basis as to insure a favourable result, and a Netherlander is not one easily induced to feel confidence in a distant country. And even by our fellow-worshippers in other countries, such connections exist for the most part among brothers and relations, or between those who by long service have proved themselves faithful to those who employed them. When such connections exist, distance does not in the least degree loosen the bonds of love, of relationship, or of friendship. For the Jew of the Netherlands, however, a very great difficulty presents itself from the want of all religious society, whereby he can remain faithful to his ancestral belief. Change of religion loosens at the same time the ties of relationship, rouses mistrust in mutual intercourse, and even frequently destroys commercial associations which have been arranged but with much trouble. The establishment of church confederacy is alone able to disperse all fear; and every one will be willing to make a sacrifice in order to preserve, and do their best to complete the arrangements when once made. The extension of commercial intercourse increases prosperity, and must work favourably with regard to the church confederacy in the mother country, by means of the success of its members. This is surely an important reason; and without doubt a sufficient one to induce you, to whom the charge of the Israelitish affairs is confided, actively to forward the plan proposed, and to strive to obtain the co-operation of the respected Government in an effort to promote its success.

5. Our representation is also recommended by the material interests arising from it for the members of our faith. By the constant increase of competition, it becomes each day more difficult for parents and guardians to obtain for

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the objects of their love and care good prospects for the future. Experience shows us that many of our European brethren in the faith have in far distant countries succeeded in obtaining good prospects and a high position in the commercial world. The East-Indian colonies, which have not yet been worked enough by the spirit of commerce, would open a smooth path for our young men, who, in the full vigour of life, and possessed with some means, would find there an opportunity for the advantageous employment of their powers and acquirements, and a hopeful prospect of future success. But the pious-minded cannot easily resolve to risk eternal salvation for temporal happiness. Considered in this point of view, the prospect of the erection of a synagogue, and thereby of the satisfying the most important religious wants, would induce parents and guardians to allow their charges to proceed thither. With confidence in the moral principles which have been until now instilled into them, their careful preceptors would no longer hesitate to send them to a far country, where is offered to them, with more certainty than here, a good standing in the commercial world, and where also heavenly food can be obtained in the bosom of the church. And even the greater activity and prudence to which they would be obliged to accustom themselves during the first years of their residence there, would exercise a favourable influence on their piety and morality, and carelessness and indifference, which now occupy their minds for want of employment, would then be changed into earnestness and zeal.

6. Even the simple purpose of this journey, to make still further researches concerning the condition of our brethren in the faith in several parts deserves encouragement and assistance. This certainly may appear at first sight to be of no interest to our Government; but on nearer inspection it is obvious that merely from motives of general philantropy it is fully entitled to the sympathy of the legislature. The experience of later years has oftentimes taught us how many advantages have arisen for mankind

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from the mediation of one kingdom with another, and how this mediation with kingdoms, where religious tolerance was unknown, has obtained perfect freedom and equality for all religions for the future. Even the evils arising from religious hatred and fanatic zeal, and degenerating into avarice and blood thirsteness, to which our brethren in the faith were exposed 30 years ago, are checked by the intervention of other Powers, and the sufferings of the unhappy victimes have thereby become less. In a later case of persecution of the Jews, a Government, under which emancipation had never existed, came forward in the interests of humanity, discovered the dreadful means used for persecution, and suppressed the crying wrong. The Netherlanders have likewise often shewn their sympathy for the unhappy fate of those oppressed in other countries and in every place, where religious hatred has been the cause of persecution, they have readily accorded their intercession for the sufferers. Hardly a century ago did the respected Government, in answer to a petition preferred by an Israelitish community in the Netherlands, exercise its mediation with a foreign Government; and with such effect that the command that the Israelites should quit their birth place and homes was revoked. But many of our brethren still groan under the oppression of despotism in the East; and in proof of this the above mentioned traveller furnishes us with extraordinary statements. The credibility of his accounts has been recognised by the most celebrated scholars in France; and they have likewise been confirmed by critical investigation. Our traveller has already, in many places, proved himself a benefactor to his suffering brethren; and it would conduce to the imperishable glory of our Government, if they would extend a helping hand to their unfortunate fellow-creatures, an act which they can the more easily perform, in as much as it is, only desired they should undertake the expenses of the journey, and nothing more. We feel assured that when once a religious community for the Israelites has been established, our wealthy brethren here as well as there

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will join in its support by direct as well as by indirect assistance.

7. Further search from the colonies of the Netherlands for our scattered brethren can, under the blessing of God, be likewise productive of beneficial results for the temporal welfare of our brethren there, and probably open new paths for our Netherlandic trade. The history of the times of Charles the Great informs us, that solely through the instrumentality of our brethren in the faith very extensive commercial transactions were negociated with Arabia and Persia. It appears that seeking for sources of trade was the first inducement for the celebrated journey of Benjamin of Tudela. The tediousness of the means of communication, and the cruelty of the middle ages caused this journey to be fruitless, and the enterprises begun were soon frustrated. In the meantime, the enterprising spirit of our fellow-worshippers has shone brightly since the persecutions on the Iberian peninsula and in Germany in the pages of later history, and probably the Netherlands have also in part to thank that spirit of enterprise for their flourishing trade in the beginning of the thirty years war. By the extension of the association of our brethren, commercial connections are now easier to be formed. The wish for pious and well educated Israelites brought many of them from Bagdad and Arabia to the English possessions, where they found a wide field for their enterprising spirit and reaped a *rich* harvest therefrom. By the increase of education and knowledge among our Western brethren, it will be a matter of less difficulty in these days for our young people to derive advantages from these new openings; and when once efforts are commenced for the promotion of their eternal welfare, he, who has proved himself worthy of the confidence of his brethren in the East-Indian possessions of the Netherlands, will be placed in a position of being able to further their temporal welfare also.

We take the liberty of bringing these different points under the consideration of your profound wisdom, and we

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flatter ourselves with the hope of obtaining by your mediation the co-operation of the respected Government for the execution of the proposed plan. The ways and means of carrying it out are matters of secondary consideration, — if Government will only favourably receive our present representation. We will only place in the foreground that with the many means of transport at the disposition of Government, the expense of the journey can be but comparatively trifling; and thus nothing stands in the way of its execution. The small expenditure bears no comparison with the advantages promised by the expedition. We believe ourselves justified in especially recommending to you this plan for your kind assistance in your official capacity; and then will be enhanced the glory and dignity of Israel, when once by your assistance, under the flag of the Netherlands, shall wave the banner of Israel's church confederacy in the East-Indies. The reproach of proselytism can in no way be made against you, as the mission only confines itself to the furtherance of religion among our own people; a pure work of piety, acceptable to the God of Israel. It will be called a noble effort, if virtue and probity, prosperity and piety increase in Israel, if by Israel's humanity and benevolence, happy sources are opened for so many idle hands; and if by generous assistance, the industry of many an Israelite is roused, and he sees himself, under the protection of a church confederacy, free from all oppression. Therein will be recognised the fulfilment of the words of the prophet: „W'erastich."

Given by us, the Chief-Rabbis of the Chief-Synagogue of Rotterdam and the Hague.

Rotterdam and the Hague.
Ijar 5617 (Mai 1857).

(signed) *B. S. Berenstein,*
C. R. of the Jew. Com. at the Hague.

Ib. van Ib. Ferares,
C. R. of the Portuguese Jew. Com. at the Hague.

Dr. J. Isaacsohn,
C. R. of Rotterdam.

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On the part of the chief committee, the objection was raised to the above petition, that I as a foreigner, could, like any-one else, only go to the Dutch East-Indies if I were able to prove the possession of a certain sum of money. In order to remove this difficulty, I addressed myself to the Professors of Oriental languages at the universities of Leyden and Delfzyl, on whose especial recommendations, permission was granted to me by the Minister to proceed to the Dutch East-Indies, without being called upon to produce the required sum. — But as a definite decision on the part of the Chief-Committee was delayed, I travelled to Frankfurt on the Maine, and learnt there, for the purposes of my second journey, photography and stereoscopy, and likewise provided myself with the necessary apparatus.

As no definite answer arrived from the Hague, I then proceeded to Hanover, where I published the present work. After having arranged my personal and family affairs at home, I hope under the protection of the Almighty, soon to commence my second journey, and with the assistance of the Eternal, once more to investigate those countries, which are the cradles of all science and wisdom, and whose secrets have been all too long shrouded in night and darkness.

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Acht Jahre

in

Asien und Afrika.

Von 1846 bis 1855.

Von

J. J. Benjamin II.
aus Foltitscheny in der Moldau.

Nebst einem Vorworte von Dr. Berthold Seemann.

Mit einer Karte.

Dritte vermehrte und verbesserte Auflage.
Mit vergleichenden Notizen aus Benjamin de Tudela, R. Pethachia, Pedro Teixeira und Ritter's Erdkunde.

Hannover 1860.
Selbstverlag des Verfassers.
Druck von Wilh. Riemschneider.

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Der Verfasser behält sich das Recht der Uebersetzung in andere Sprachen vor.

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Vorwort.

Eine der erfreulichsten Betrachtungen unserer Zeit ist: Mißbräuche, die sich Jahrtausende erhielten, beseitigt; Vorurtheile, die unzähligen Geschlechtern als unvermeidlich galten, abgeschafft zu sehen. Die Sonne der Aufklärung dringt in die entlegensten Gegenden der Erde und erwärmt mit ihren Strahlen Gegenstände und Verhältnisse, die zu einem eisigen Todesleben auf ewig verdammt zu sein schienen. Mit nüchternen Worten: — Die Wissenschaft macht jetzt mehr wie je ihren wohlthätigen Einfluß geltend und alles was nicht auf sie fußt, gewahrt sich in seinem Fortbestehen bedroht. Ueberall wo man sie zur Anwendung bringen kann, weiß man im voraus, auf welche Seite der Sieg sich schließlich neigen wird, und es ist gerade diese Ueberzeugung, welche zu steter lebensfrischer Thätigkeit anspornt, immer von neuem ermuthigt, den Kampf gegen alles Unwahre und Schlechte, gleichviel, ob es als Vorurtheil, als Misbrauch, als Unterdrückung oder als Entsittung auftritt, fortzusetzen. Die von Herrn J. J. Benjamin bereisten Strecken, die Morgenländer, bieten für jene Thätigkeit ein unermeßliches Feld; alles was den Menschen entwürdigt, hat dort Jahrhunderte lang sein ungestörtes Wesen getrieben, und eine solche Verwirrung der Begriffe von Recht und Unrecht erzeugt, daß man auf eine rasche Beseitigung jener empörenden Gesellschaftszustände vorläufig nicht hoffen darf. Der Fanatismus tritt dort in seiner widerwärtigsten Gestalt auf, und malt oft mit blutigem Finger die Gräuelscenen seiner Verirrungen auf die Blätter der Geschichte. Macht, nicht Recht führt den Vorsitz, und wer die erstere nicht besitzt, kann auch das letztere

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nie erlangen. Vor Allen sind es die Juden, welche, überall zerstreut, nirgend ein „Volk“ bildend, dem ganzen Misgeschick einer Willkürherrschaft ausgesetzt sind. Nur an wenigen Orten, wie Bagdad, erfreuen sie sich einer glücklicheren Lage, und entfalten daselbst eine Thätigkeit und einen Wohlstand, die ebenso nutzbringend für sie selbst wie für die Stätte sind, auf der sie sich angesiedelt haben. An den meisten Orten dagegen fand unser Benjamin seine Glaubensgenossen vom Drucke der Willkür niedergebeugt, ja sogar hie und da in wirklicher Sklaverei oder nur noch dem Namen nach zu jener großen Religionssecte gehörend, deren Ueberlieferungen den bleibendsten Einfluß auf die Menschheit hinterlassen haben. Des Philanthropen bemächtigt sich bei der Schilderung solcher Verhältnisse die tiefste Entrüstung und er sieht sich mitleidig nach den Mitteln zur Abhülfe eines solchen Unwesens um. Glücklicherweise liegen dieselben näher, als man bei einer oberflächlichen Betrachtung der Sachlage glauben sollte; sie bestehen zunächst in der Hinwegräumung der Vorurtheile, unter denen die Juden noch in vielen der gebildetsten Theile Europas seufzen. Ein jeder Aufgeklärte, gleichviel in welchen Kreisen er sich bewege, kann hierzu mitwirken. Es ist gerade, wie der große Staatsmann Lord Stratford de Redcliffe am 27. April 1858 dem britischen Parlamente versicherte, es ist gerade die bis jetzt unerreichte Hinwegräumung der Fesseln des Vorurtheils im Abendlande, welche den Freunden der religiösen Freiheit und politischen Gleichstellung der Juden im Morgenlande die Hände bindet. Wenn es daher gilt, einen solch hehren Zweck zu fördern, so geziemt es jedem Manne des Fortschrittes, freudig sein Scherflein dazu beizutragen. An Argumenten wird es ihm dazu nicht fehlen, nachdem die Wissenschaft der letzteren Jahre sie ihm so reichlich eingeliefert hat. Auch haben die Juden überall, wo man sie den übrigen Religionssecten gleichgestellt, eine Thätigkeit entwickelt, die von den segensreichsten Folgen für diejenigen Länder begleitet gewesen ist, welche jenen Act der Gerechtigkeit geübt, und den Nationalökonomen mit gutem Fug zu der Frage berechtigt haben: „Ob es nicht gerathener sei, einen solchen thatkräftigen, geistig-regen Volksstamm durch liberale Concessionen aufzumuntern, als ihn in seiner materiellen und geistigen Entwickelung zu beschränken?“ —

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Mit vielem Glücke haben sich die Juden in unserer Zeit auf dem Gebiete der Wissenschaft und Kunst getummelt, und viele der gefeiertsten Namen unserer Dichter und Schriftsteller werden von ihnen mit gerechtem Stolz als die ihrer Glaubensbrüder bezeichnet. Was dieser hochbegabte Volksstamm unter den ungünstigsten Verhältnissen, in fortwährender Unterdrückung und umringt von kränkenden Vorurtheilen, geleistet, haben Geschichtschreiber mit Genugthuung berichtet; was er aber, frei geworden, für die Menschheit, die Welt thun könnte, trotzt jeder Berechnung; er bietet die Elemente einer Macht dar, die kein Nationalökonom, kein Politiker, will er nicht kurzsichtig heißen, unterschätzen darf; überall wo er sich findet (sei es auch in noch so abgeschwächtem Zustande) liefert er Anhaltspunkte zum Nachdenken, Keime, großartiger Entwickelung fähig. Stets hat sich daher, abgesehen von dem biblischen, ein hohes Interesse an die Vertheilung und Zerstreuung der Juden geknüpft, und nachzuweisen, welches Land die zehn Stämme Israels aufnahm, ist eine wissenschaftliche Aufgabe, deren Lösung die weitgreifendste Bedeutung besitzt. — Zu dieser Lösung liefern Benjamin's „Acht Jahre in Asien und Afrika" einen bescheidenen, aber nichtsdestoweniger beachtenswerthen Beitrag, der als solcher der Empfehlung auch in Kreisen verdient, die sich nicht auf den biblischen Standpunkt stellen, den der geehrte Verfasser einnimmt. Mögen diese wenigen Worte dazu dienen, dem Buche jene Empfehlung zu verschaffen, eine kleine Hülfeleistung sein, wie sie ein Reisender dem andern gern gewährt, wenn beide sich zufällig begegnen, um bald darauf auf verschiedenen Wegen die Wanderung nach einem Ziele fortzusetzen.

22 Canonbury Square, Islington, London.
Mai 3. 1858.

Berthold Seemann, Dr.
Adjunkt der k. k. Leopold.-Carol. Akademie.

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Vorwort des Verfassers.

Der Verfasser hatte die Ehre, während des Druckes der vorliegenden Arbeit dieselbe theilweise einigen der hervorragendsten Männer auf dem Gebiete der Wissenschaft vorlegen zu dürfen, deren geneigte Beurtheilungen er seinen eigenen einleitenden Zeilen voransetzt, da er in ihnen den besten Beweis der nicht gänzlichen Resultatlosigkeit seiner Bestrebungen findet.

I.

Auszug aus einem Schreiben Sr. Exc. des Herrn Alexander von Humboldt, Wirkl. Geh. Raths und Königl. Kammerherrn ꝛc. zu Berlin.

Ich habe in Anerkennung des edlen Zweckes, welchen Sie auf so weiten Landreisen verfolgt haben, die Zustände eines zerstreuten und unterdrückten Volkes zu ergründen, mit vielem Interesse einige Bogen ihres Reisewerkes gelesen. Sie schildern Zustände der Entartung in den Unterdrückten, der Willkürsgewalt in den Unterdrückern, welche in Europa wenig bekannt sind und Ihrem Buche gewiß und mit Recht viele Leser verschaffen werden.

Mögen Ihre neuen Unternehmungen ebenfalls gelingen!

Berlin, den 25. März 1858.

Alexander von Humboldt.

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II.

Gutachten des Herrn Professor Dr. Carl Ritter in Berlin.

Einige von mir aus beiliegenden Aushängebogen einer orientalischen Reise des Herrn Benjamin gelesene Capitel haben mich sehr angesprochen, da sie in einer sehr klaren und einfachen Sprache die Erlebnisse und Erfahrungen des Herrn Verfassers von seinem allerdings speciellen Standpunkte, aber im lebendigen Interesse seiner Glaubensbrüder und Glaubensgenossen, darstellen und sicher bei neuen zu vervollständigenden Forschungen und Wanderungen zur Verbesserung ihres Schicksals im Orient durch lebendigere Theilnahme im Occident nicht wenig beitragen können, für welche jede wahrhaft treue Ermittelung gedrückter Zustände nur von fruchtbarem Ertrage für eine zu verbessernde Zukunft sein kann.

Berlin, den 30. März 1858.

C. Ritter, Dr. & Prof. phil.
Mitglied der Akademie der Wissenschaften.

III.

Gutachten des Herrn Professors Dr. H. Petermann zu Berlin.

Die Reise des Herrn J. J. Benjamin, die er in Wahrnehmung seines berühmten Namensvetters von Tudela unternommen hat, giebt interessante Aufschlüsse über die Ausbreitung seiner Glaubensgenossen in den verschiedenen Ländern, welche er bereist hat, über ihre Gemeinden, ihre Gebräuche und Traditionen, und können dazu dienen, einen Vergleich mit dem Werke jenes Rabbinen anzustellen und zu erkennen, wie die israelitische Bevölkerung in jenen Gegenden theils zu- theils abgenommen hat. Trotz der Vorliebe für seine Brüder verschweigt er doch nicht ihre Fehler, ihren Mangel an Bildung, ihren Aberglauben, wo er sich ihm zeigt, und überhaupt tragen seine Berichte den Stempel der Wahrheit und Glaubwürdigkeit, so daß das Werk, zumal da es auch mit Frische und Lebendigkeit geschrieben ist, das Interesse vieler Leser, die ich ihm von Herzen wünsche, erringen wird. Vieles davon kann ich auch aus eigener Anschauung bestätigen.

Berlin, 29. März 1858. **H. Petermann.**

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IV.

Gutachten des Herrn Dr. A. Helfferich in Berlin.

Nach seinen bisherigen Leistungen zu schließen, dürfte, meines Erachtens, eine zweite gründliche Erforschung Asiens durch Herrn Benjamin zu um so erfreulicheren Ergebnissen führen, als derselbe, vollkommen vertraut mit den dortigen Verhältnissen, ganz der geeignete Mann ist, über die gänzlich verschollenen Trümmer nicht blos der Juden, sondern auch der Nestorianer in Central-Asien Erkundigungen einzuziehen. Insbesondere stände eine hocherfreuliche Ausbeute an Handschriften zu erwarten, die jedem Freunde der Culturgeschichte willkommen sein müßte. Je traurig er der Zugang zu der Wiege der Menschheit verschüttet ist, desto eifriger muß man wünschen, daß recht Viele das Wagniß einer Reise nach diesen ebenso dunkeln als merkwürdigen Gegenden nicht scheuen mögen, und die Art und Weise, wie Herr Benjamin seine Aufgabe begriffen und zum Theil schon gelöst hat, berechtigt zu nicht geringen Hoffnungen. So mögen auch die Erwartungen des wackern Reisenden in Erfüllung gehen!

Berlin, den 10. April 1858. **Adolf Helfferich.**

V.

Beurtheilung des Herrn Dr. A. Guthe in Hannover.

Es gereicht mir zum großen Vergnügen, das Reisewerk des Herrn Benjamin, mit dem ich mich durch sorgfältiges Studium der Aushängebogen bekannt gemacht habe, dem größeren Publikum aufs Angelegentlichste empfehlen zu können. Abgesehen von seinem Hauptzwecke, sichere Nachrichten über die Lage der Judengemeinden im Oriente mitzutheilen und das Interesse Europas für die unter hartem Drucke schmachtenden Glaubensgenossen des Verfassers zu erwecken, bietet dasselbe auch manche Berührung der geographischen Wissenschaft dar, weil es dem kühnen und beharrlichen Reisenden gelungen ist, manche Gegenden zu durchwandern, die von christlichen Reisenden nicht betreten sind. Der Verfasser hat ein offenes Auge für die Volksthümlichkeiten der Nationen, mit denen er in Berührung gekommen, und schildert anschaulich deren Sitten und Lebensweise.

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Möchte es dem Verfasser gelingen, die Mittel zu einer zweiten, größeren Reise nach dem Oriente zusammen zu bringen! Die Resultate derselben werden um so bedeutender ausfallen, jemehr der Verfasser das Glück gehabt hat, gelehrte Orientalisten für sich zu interessiren, die ihm Instructionen für seine demnächstigen Forschungen gegeben haben.

Da der Ertrag des Werkes wesentlich dazu bestimmt ist, dem Reisenden wenigstens einen Theil dieser Reisemittel zu verschaffen, so empfehle ich auch aus diesem Grunde dasselbe der allgemeinen Theilnahme.

Hannover, Mai 1858. **A. Guthe,** Dr. phil.

VI.

Gutachten des Herrn Dr. Magnus in Breslau.

Von Herrn Benjamin aus der Moldau aufgefordert, mein Urtheil über sein nächstens im Druck vollendetes Reisewerk, welches seine achtjährigen Wanderungen und Abenteuer in Asien und Afrika erzählt, abzugeben, kann ich, soweit ich dasselbe durchzusehen Gelegenheit gehabt habe, mit vollster Ueberzeugung versichern, daß diese Schilderungen nicht blos jedem Gebildeten eine ebenso ansprechende und unterhaltende, als belehrende Lectüre zu verschaffen geeignet sein werden, sondern daß dieselben auch für die Wissenschaft insofern eine immerhin dankenswerthe Ausbeute abwerfen, als sie die Verhältnisse der heutigen Juden in den genannten Ländern aus eigener Anschauung vorführen. Außerdem gewinnt die Arbeit des Herrn Benjamin noch dadurch ein eigenthümliches Interesse, daß sie durch den anspruchslosen Geist und den schlichten Ton, in welchem sie gehalten ist, überall an das Reisewerk seines berühmten Glaubensgenossen und Namensvetters aus dem zwölften nachchristlichen Jahrhundert, an die Massaot des Benjamin von Tudela erinnert, welchen es sich würdig an die Seite stellt.

Breslau, den 15. Juni 1858.

Dr. E. J. Magnus,
Docent der oriental. Sprachen und rabbin. Literatur
an der Universität zu Breslau.

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Der Raum gestattet mir nicht, noch mehre Gutachten verschiedener Männer unserer Zeit mit abdrucken zu können.

Nach solchen Urtheilen darf ich selbst es kaum wagen und halte es für überflüssig, nochmals genauer auf die vorliegende Arbeit einzugehen. Nach den Anstrengungen einer Reihe von Jahren habe ich in ihnen den reichsten Lohn für alle meine Mühen, und den Muth zur Veröffentlichung dieser Arbeit gefunden, sowie sie endlich mir ein Sporn sind zur rastlosen Fortsetzung des Begonnenen.

Indem ich die Resultate meiner achtjährigen Forschungen dem geneigten Leser, und vor Allen meinen Glaubensgenossen vorlege, darf ich um so mehr auf die nachsichtige Beurtheilung aller derer rechnen, die das Schwierige, fast Unerreichbare in der mir gestellten Aufgabe erkennen. Seit den Zeiten des ehrwürdigen und berühmten Rabbi Benjamin de Tudela hat Niemand sich ausschließlich mit einem so erhabenen Vornehmen beschäftigt und diese säculare Unterbrechung eines hochwichtigen Unternehmens häuft für den Forscher die zahlreichen natürlichen Schwierigkeiten, die sich der Verfolgung der Sache entgegenstellen.

Trotz aller dieser Schwierigkeiten, glaube ich, ist es mir dennoch gelungen, einiges Licht auf die Trümmer der Nachkommen eines Volkes zu werfen, dessen Jahrhunderte lange Verbannung einzig in den Jahrbüchern der Geschichte erscheint, eines Volkes, das die Forschungen und Theilnahme Aller verdient, die von der hohen Mission, welche die Vorsehung ihm angewiesen hat, durchdrungen sind. Ich habe es versucht, durch eine getreue Schilderung ihrer heutigen Lage, durch Erforschung ihrer alterthümlichen Traditionen, sie aus der Nacht der Vergessenheit hervorzuziehen, und würde mich glücklich schätzen, wenn ich dadurch einige Sympathien für sie erwecken könnte, wenn ich hoffen dürfte, einige Erleichterung ihres materiellen Zustandes, einige der Wohlthaten der Civilisation, insbesondere religiöse Duldung für sie zu erlangen. Vor allen Andern wünsche ich die Theilnahme meiner Glaubensgenossen in Europa für ihre unglücklichen Brüder zu erwecken, die in jene unwirthbaren Länder verbannt, welche selten, fast niemals, der Fuß eines Europäers betreten hat. Unter dem Jahrhunderte langen Joche des Fanatismus, der Barbarei, trotz

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aller Verfolgungen und Bedrückungen, trotz Raub und Mord, sind sie dennoch standhaft geblieben in dem Glauben ihrer Väter. Würde durch meine Schilderungen etwas Wirksames erreicht, so würde ich alle die Mühen und Gefahren einer langen und beschwerlichen Pilgerfahrt nicht für verloren halten.

Neben diesem großen und vornehmlichen Zwecke meiner Wanderungen im Orient habe ich es versucht, an passenden Stellen meines Werkes durch Einflechtung historischer, geographischer, statistischer und anderer Notizen einige Aufklärung über bisher unbekannte Verhältnisse der Länder zu geben, die ich besucht habe, und hoffe, daß dieselben überall nicht unbekannt sein werden.

Die ursprünglich von mir veranstaltete französische Ausgabe dieses Werkes enthält nur Reiseberichte aus Asien, auch haben sich in dieselbe, da ich nicht persönlich den Druck überwachen konnte, eine Menge Fehler, sowohl in den Thatsachen selbst, wie in den geographischen Namen eingeschlichen. Die vorliegende deutsche Ausgabe enthält außer den Reisen in Asien noch die Mittheilungen über meine afrikanischen Wanderungen; auch ist dieselbe durchgängig berichtigt und verbessert.

Nachdem ich zum Zwecke der Herausgabe dieses Reisewerkes meine Wanderungen und Forschungen für einige Zeit unterbrochen, beabsichtige ich dieselben nunmehr wieder aufzunehmen. In einiger Zeit schon werde ich mit der göttlichen Hülfe eine zweite Reise nach dem Orient antreten, zu welcher ich von geachteter Hand mit einer Anzahl wichtiger Anhaltspunkte für meine Nachforschungen versehen bin, und hoffe nach Vollendung derselben eine gediegenere und genauere Arbeit liefern zu können.

Hannover, September 1858.

Israel Joseph Benjamin.

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Acht Jahre in Asien und Afrika.

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Einleitung

zu Benjamin's Reisewerk „Acht Jahre in Asien und Afrika."

Pedro Teixeira.

Von

Dr. M. Kayserling.[1]

Reisen und Wandern ist das Schicksal und die Bestimmung der Juden seit Tausenden von Jahren. Wie dieses Volk in seiner Urgeschichte ein Nomadenleben führte, so schlug es in späterer Zeit, nachdem seine Geschichte aus der Reihe der Staaten geschwunden war, allenthalben sein Zelt auf und wanderte von Ort zu Ort, von Land zu Land, wie es die Politik und die Laune der einzelnen Regenten und fürstlichen Herren über die unglücklichen, an Austreibung und Exil gewöhnten Juden verhängte.

Das waren Wanderungen und Reisen, welche die Leiden der verachteten Paria-Classe mehrten, der Wissenschaft aber und der Literatur keinen Nutzen brachten. Hat denn wol der zum Wandern und Reisen Getriebene für etwas Anderes ein Auge, als für einen Ort, wo seinen matten Fuß er niederlassen kann? Sucht der einer Gefahr entronnene Wanderer auf seinem großen, weiten Wege einen andern Punkt als den, welcher ihn vor seinen Verfolgern schützt? Wer dieses bedenkt, darf sich nicht wundern, daß

[1] Diese Skizze wurde auf den Wunsch des Herrn Benjamin und zu dessen Gunsten der Oeffentlichkeit übergeben. Möge sie als ein Beitrag zur Geschichte und Geographie der Juden freundliche Aufnahme finden!

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bei all den Reisen und Wanderungen, welche den Juden aller Länder so oft sind decretirt worden, die Wissenschaft der Geographie so leer ausgegangen ist. An Geist und Anschauungsgabe hat es den Reisenden wahrlich nicht gefehlt; sie waren jedoch nur mit sich und ihrem eigenen Schicksale beschäftigt und kümmerten sich wenig um das, was sie umgab.

Wie Alles fand auch die Reisebeschreibung der Juden in Spanien früh ihre Pflege.

Es ist mehr als eine bloße Metapher, wenn man die hesperische Halbinsel als den Sitz der gebildetsten und gelehrtesten Juden während des Mittelalters bezeichnet. Wie neben den gründlichsten Talmudstudien, Philosophie und Medicin, Naturkunde und Astrologie dort von Juden gepflegt und angebaut wurden, so kommen uns auch von spanischen Juden die ersten Berichte über die von ihnen unternommenen Reisen.

Benjamin von Tudela, der weit und breit bekannte jüdische Reisende, richtete zuerst sein Augenmerk auf seine Brüder in der Fremde und verzeichnete die Erlebnisse und Ergebnisse seiner Reise in dem berühmten schätzbaren Werke, das seinen Namen trägt und verewigt.

Charisi trat von Spanien, seiner Heimath, die Wanderung an. Er bereiste Spanien und die Provence, besuchte Alexandrien, nahm seinen Aufenthalt in der heiligen Stadt, in dem Lande, das verherrlicht durch Israels Jugendzeit, verherrlicht durch die geheiligten Stätten, ging nach Persien und kehrte durch Griechenland in seine Heimath zurück.

Auch der Jude Parchi stammte aus Spanien. Er durchwanderte Aegypten und ihm verdanken wir die genaue Kenntniß von der Beschaffenheit Palästinas in seiner Zeit.

Die Juden der Halbinsel waren gelehrt und, wie auch die Menge immerhin bedrückt und verhöhnt worden ist, Jahrhunderte hindurch wegen ihrer Kenntnisse geachtet. Sie dienten nicht allein den Königen und Herrschern als Finanzminister und Schatzmeister, als Steuereinnehmer und Domänenverwalter, sie erfreuten nicht nur die Herren und Damen an den Höfen und in den Palästen durch ihre Gesänge und Dichtungen, sie waren auch die Lehrer und Unterweiser der Könige und Prinzen, sie, die Juden, die

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Verwahrer und die Verbreiter der Wissenschaft in dem christlichen Staate.

Als der durch seine heldenmüthigen Kämpfe eben so sehr, wie durch seine Liebe zur Geographie ausgezeichnete portugiesische Prinz, Heinrich der Navigator, seinen Sinn auf Afrika richtete, um das Goldland zu entdecken, zog er von den Juden Erkundigungen ein über die Gegenden, welche von ihnen in Handelsangelegenheiten waren durchreist worden, und jeder jüdische Wandersmann fand gastliche Aufnahme bei dem der Wissenschaft ergebenen Fürsten auf seinem Landsitze in Algarve. Es wäre mehr als Undankbarkeit, wollte man bei den frühesten Entdeckungen der Portugiesen der Juden, ihrer Berichte und Rathschläge nicht eingedenk sein.

Eine ganze Reihe gelehrter Geographen ging aus der portugiesischen Nation hervor; bei den weitreichenden Verbindungen, welche die neuen Entdecker mit den Völkerschaften Asiens und Afrikas anknüpften, konnte natürlich auch das wissenschaftliche Interesse nicht ausbleiben.

Zu den Portugiesen, welche durch ihre Schriften die geographische Wissenschaft bereicherten und wegen der von ihnen unternommenen Reisen zu den Weltreisenden gezählt werden, gehört auch Pedro Teixeira, der Mann, dessen Andenken durch diese Skizze neu aufgefrischt und dessen Forschungen und Betrachtungen, so weit sie die Juden und ihre Monumente betreffen, unserer Zeit wieder vorgeführt werden sollen.

Schon der Name ist von gutem Klang und in der geographischen Literatur wohl bekannt![1]

Unser Pedro Teixeira[2] war einer jener portugiesischen Juden-

[1] Wir nennen hier nur Ludwig Teixeira, welcher 1598 (1602) eine nueva Geographia y Hydrografia del Orbo schrieb. Ein Pedro Teixeira hatte die ganze spanische Küste längs des mittelländischen Meeres bereist und eine Descripcion de la costa de España veröffentlicht; er starb in den 70er Jahren des 17. Jahrhunderts.

[2] Nicht Teireira, Teirera, Terera, wie Wolf (nach Barrios) bibl. hebr. III. 922, IV. 953 und Zunz in der trefflichen Abhandlung „on geographical literature of the Jews“ in Asher's Ausgabe des Benjamin de Tudela (Berlin 1840) II. 282, angeben. Da ein großer Theil der deutsch-polni-

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familien entsprossen, welche sich nicht öffentlich als solche zeigen und ihre Kinder nicht in dem Glauben der Väter erziehen durften. Mancher Jüngling dieses Geschlechts erfuhr erst mit dem letzten Segen, welchen er vom Vater in der Sterbestunde erhielt, seine eigentliche Abstammung, die Religion, der die Eltern ihrer innersten Ueberzeugung nach treu geblieben und für welche von ihren Vorfahren Folter und Marter aller Art waren ertragen worden. Dieses Vermächtniß des Herzens, wenn wir so sagen dürfen, nahmen viele in ihrem Busen willig auf und viele fachten den in ihnen glimmenden Funken der Liebe zum Judenthum erst alsdann wieder an, wenn die Zeit nicht mehr fern schien, wo sie den Ihren von ihrem Thun und Lassen, von der Verwaltung des Vermächtnisses Rechenschaft ablegen und mit den Geliebten in einem Jenseits wieder vereint werden sollten.

So erging es auch unserm Pedro Teixeira.

War er auch wohl von jüdischen Eltern, welche aller Wahrscheinlichkeit nach in Lissabon wohnten, geboren, so wurde er doch nicht im jüdischen Gesetze erzogen. Trotz der Ergebenheit in den göttlichen Willen, welche uns fast auf jedem Blatte seines Reisebuches entgegentritt und welche ihm gleichsam angeboren war, trotz des ihm innewohnenden Bewußtseins, daß Alles, was ihn traf, was ihm widerfuhr, daß Alles, was er empfing und genoß, die Macht des Höchsten ihm bot — ein Zug, welcher sich mehr als einmal in Teixeira zu erkennen giebt — glauben wir dennoch aus seiner Erzählung selbst wahrnehmen zu können, daß er während eines großen Theils seines Lebens, während seiner Wanderungen, ja bis zu seiner Ankunft in Antwerpen Christ und zwar ein rechtgläubiger Katholik gewesen sei.

In Antwerpen, dem ältesten holländischen Sitze spanisch-portugiesischer Flüchtlinge, ließ sich Pedro nach Beendigung seiner Reise nieder, dort übergab er sein schätzbares Werk über den Ur-

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schen Juden den Laut ei häufig wie e ausspricht, so wurden spanische Namen wie Teixeira, Morteira von ihnen Texera, Mortera gelesen und geschrieben. Uebrigens nennt ihn auch der oben genannte Barrios (Triumpho del Govierno Popolar, 10, 77) Pedro Teyxeyra (sic). Häufig citirt unsern Reisenden der gelehrte Thomas de Pinedo, der Bearbeiter und Commentator des Stephanus Byzantinus in seinem Commentar.

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sprung und die Folge der Könige von Persien und Harmuz der Oeffentlichkeit, dort schrieb er seine „Reise von Ostindien bis Italien“ [1] und dort, nicht in Verona,[2] ging er, wahrscheinlich in dem ersten Drittel des 17. Jahrhunderts, als Jude zu seinen Vätern in ein besseres Leben über.

Ohne auf das eben genannte historische Werk des von früher Jugend an dem Studium der Geschichte obliegenden Teixeira näher einzugehen, wollen wir ihn, den erfahrenen, theoretisch gebildeten Wandersmann, eine Strecke verfolgen.

Nachdem Pedro von seiner ersten großen $1\frac{1}{2}$ Jahr dauernden Reise, welche er, um — wie er sich ausdrückt — die Zeit zu vertreiben und neue Gegenden kennen zu lernen, nach den Philippinen, China und einem Theile der neuen Welt unternommen hatte, im September 1601 zurückgekehrt war, schickte er sich nach einem $2\frac{1}{2}$jährigen Aufenthalt in Lissabon zu einer zweiten, wissenschaftliche Zwecke verfolgenden Fahrt nach Indien, Persien und andern Ländern an. Teixeira war zu dieser Wanderung trefflich vorbereitet und mit dem nicht allen Reisenden eigenen Talente begabt, alles Merkwürdige zu beachten, aus eigner Anschauung kennen zu lernen. Wir wollen hier nicht untersuchen, ob es der alte jüdische Geist war, welcher ihn antrieb, auch die jüdischen Monumente aus grauer Vorzeit eines Blickes zu würdigen, ob aus Achtung vor den Vorfahren seines Stammes sein forschendes Auge auch

[1] Der Titel seines uns vorliegenden Werkes lautet: Relaciones de Pedro Teixeira d'el Origen, descendencia y succession de los Reyes de Persia y de Harmuz, y de un viage hecho por el mismo autor dende la India Oriental hasta Italia etc. Amberes, Hieronymus Verdussen 1610.

[2] In Verona läßt ihn der spanische Dichter Daniel Levi de Barrios — über ihn und seine Dichtungen in unserer demnächst erscheinenden Schrift: „Romanische Poesien der Juden in Spanien“ — sterben; vergl. Relacion de los Poetas Españoles, 58: „Pedro Teireira (Teixeira) . . . murio en Verona.“ So auch Wolf, l. c. III. 922; Zunz l. c.; Steinschneider, Jewish literature (London 1857), 258. Barrios, eine zuverlässige Quelle, so lange er sich auf Verhältnisse und Personen seiner Zeit beschränkt, war hier nicht genau unterrichtet, und verdient die betreffende Angabe des portugiesischen Bibliographen Barbosa jedenfalls mehr Glauben. Barbosa berichtet in seiner Bibl. lusit. (Lisboa 1747) III. 622: Vizitou Veneza, donde por terra veyo a Anveres e nesta cidade fez o seu domicilio até a morte.“

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die in heiliger Erde ruhenden Stammesgenossen aufsuchte, oder ob in dieser unbefangenen, vorurtheilsfreien Beschauung sich nur der hohe Grad seiner wissenschaftlichen Bildung ausprägt, genug, Teixeira hat auf seiner Reise und in seinem Reisebuche der jüdischen Denkmäler und der Juden selbst gedacht; seine Glaubensbrüder sind ihm dafür zu Dank verpflichtet. Daß dieser „bewährte Schriftsteller", wie Menasse ben Israel ihn nennt,[1] aus Autopsie berichtet und nicht etwa das Itinerarium des Tudeler jüdischen Kaufmanns vor sich hatte, bedarf wol kaum einer Erwähnung. Benjamin's Reisewerk war freilich im Text in seiner Zeit in mehreren Ausgaben vorhanden; ohne der Gelehrsamkeit Pedro's jedoch zu nahe treten zu wollen, glauben wir behaupten zu können, daß Benjamin für *ihn* nicht vorhanden war, weil er das Hebräische nicht verstand, und eine Uebersetzung? Die erste von dem gelehrten Benedictiner Arias Montano veranstaltete dieses Werkes mag kaum unserem Reisenden vorgelegen haben.

Mit dem herzlichen Bedauern, daß unser portugiesischer Reisender von seinen Glaubensgenossen in Persien und Indien nicht ausführlich spricht, nehmen wir hier von ihm Abschied.[2]

Teixeira hatte seine Aufgabe begriffen und seinen Leistungen ward die Anerkennung in reichlicher Maße zu Theil.

Möge sich denn auch der Reisende des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts des Wohlwollens seiner Leser zu erfreuen haben!

Berlin, den 2. Juni 1858.

Dr. M. Kayserling.

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[1] Spes Israelis c. 26.

[2] Die Reisenotizen Teixeira's, namentlich über die alten Denkmäler der Juden und die Berichte über seine Stammesgenossen haben wir an den betreffenden Stellen unseres Werkes zugefügt. — Seine Reise geht von Indien nach Europa, also in entgegengesetzter Richtung unserer eigenen, weshalb wir diese Form vorgezogen haben.

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Capitel 1.

Abreise aus der Moldau. — Reisezweck. — Tagebuch. — Grab des Rabbi Jacob bal Hatnrim. — Ankunft in Jernsalem.

Ich betrieb früher zu Foltitscheny in der Moldau, wo ich ansässig bin, ein bedeutendes Handelsgeschäft mit Holz und anderen Producten dieses Landes, wurde jedoch plötzlich durch meine Associés im Geschäft förmlich ruinirt. Durch dieses Ereigniß sah ich mich genöthigt, nicht allein in meinem, sondern vornehmlich im Interesse meiner Familie, mir in anderen Lebensumständen eine neue Bahn zu brechen, und dies war die äußere Veranlassung zu meinen Wanderungen im Orient.

Diese äußeren Umstände mit einem längst gehegten, seit den Tagen meiner Jugend täglich genährten innern Herzensdrange verbindend, entschloß ich mich, zunächst eine Pilgerfahrt nach jenen Gegenden anzutreten, die einst von meinen durch ihren Ruhm und ihre Geschicke geheiligten Vorvätern bewohnt waren und so gleichsam einem Traumbilde nachgehend die Spuren der noch vorhandenen Trümmer der zehn Stämme Israels aufzusuchen.

Ich trat meine Wanderung am 5. Januar 1845 an, meine 21jährige Gattin Esther Malkah, und meinen 5 Jahre alten Sohn Meyer Chajim verlassend. Meine Gattin war bei meiner Abreise in gesegneten Umständen und gebar während meiner Abwesenheit eine Tochter, die sie „Blume“ nannte.

Nach einem Besuche der vorzüglichsten Städte Oesterreichs, wohin mich meine Privat-Angelegenheiten führten, nach einer ferneren Reise durch die europäische Türkei in Konstantinopel

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angekommen, schiffte ich mich dort nach Smyrna ein, wohin ich ohne bemerkenswerthe Begegnisse gelangte.

Nach zwölfstündiger Wasserfahrt kam ich von dort aus zu dem Flecken Sakis, von lieblichen Pomeranzen- und Citronenwäldchen umgeben. Am äußersten Ende dieses Fleckens befindet sich das Grab des Rabbi Jacob baal Haturim,[1] Sohn des Rabbi Ascher ben Jechiel. Das in runder Form angelegte Grabmal ist mit einem kleinen Ziegeldache bedeckt, das Mausoleum selbst mit einem Gebäude umgeben und das Ganze durch eine Mauer umschlossen. Nahe am Eingange ruhen die Gebeine des Meschoreth (Dieners) des Rabbi. Die Juden pilgern zu verschiedenen Jahreszeiten nach dem Grabe. Der Flecken Sakis führt eine sehr gute Pomeranzen- und Citronensorte nach Oesterreich und Rußland aus.

Nach Smyrna zurückgekehrt, setzte ich in Begleitung einiger Türken meine Reise zu Pferde fort, und gelangte zunächst nach Menessia, 15 Stunden nördlich von Smyrna. Meiner europäischen Kleidung und den in Smyrna residirenden Consuln hatte ich es zu danken, daß ich auf dieser Tour nicht beunruhigt wurde, was bei der feindseligen Gesinnung der Eingebornen gegen die Europäer, welchen sie lediglich einen furchtsamen Respect zollen, häufig vorkommt. — Sechs Stunden südöstlich von Menessia liegt Casiba, eine Stadt, deren bedeutendste Erwerbsquellen die Baumwollen- und Rosinenzucht bilden; sie werden dort in großem Umfange betrieben und ihr reicher Ertrag wird von jüdischen Kaufleuten nach Konstantinopel und weiter ausgeführt.

Während dreier Tage durchreiste ich eine heitere, mit Oelbäumen bepflanzte und durch freundliche Dörfer belebte Landschaft, deren Bewohner sich mit der Bereitung und dem Verkauf des Olivenöls beschäftigen, und erreichte dann die Stadt Tirje.

[1] Der Seder Hadoroth (Fol. 48, S. 2) und der Schem Hagdolim (Wilna 1852, Fol. 43, S. 2) theilen mit, daß der genannte Rabbi auf einer Pilgerfahrt nach Palästina eine Tagereise von Smyrna gestorben ist; als den Ort seines Grabes aber nennen sie nicht Sakis, sondern Kiaw. Im Buche Abne Sikaron (Cap. 7) dagegen wird behauptet, er sei in Spanien gestorben und neben seinem Vater in Tultila (Toledo) begraben worden; auch ist eine Abschrift seines Leichensteines beigefügt. Wir führen alle diese Angaben neben unserer Erzählung der obigen Volkssage hier ohne weitere Bemerkung an.

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Drittehalb Tagereisen weiter, eine lange Reihe üppiger Gemüsegärten und Weinberge durchziehend, zwischen denen malerisch zerstreut viele Feigenbäume emporragen, kam ich zu der am Meereshafen liegenden Stadt Couschadassi, nordöstlich von Tirje, die einen geringen Handel treibt. — Hier, wie an allen oben erwähnten Orten wohnen Juden.

Auf einer Insel liegt Stankoï,[1] wohin ich mich von Couschadassi aus einschiffte, und es in etwa 18 Stunden erreichte. Die Stadt ist von schönen, mit Apfelsinen- und Citronenbäumen bepflanzten Gärten umgeben, deren Ertrag in der Türkei und im Auslande verkauft wird. Fünfzehn Stunden weiter nach Westen, am Fuße eines hohen Berges, liegt Stadt und Seehafen Sima.[2] Der untere, von den Griechen bewohnte Theil der Stadt wird vom Meere bespült, während der obere sich amphitheatralisch den hohen Berg hinaufzieht; dort wohnen die europäischen Consuln. — Die Gegend ringsum hat einen felsigen Boden und ist unbebaut, auch fehlt es der Stadt an Trinkwasser, welches von andern Gegenden auf Schiffen hierhergebracht wird. Die Einwohner beschäftigen sich mit der Bearbeitung der Schwämme und mit dem Fischfang, welcher sehr ergiebig ist und eine nicht unbedeutende Ausfuhr gesalzener Fische in ferne Gegenden veranlaßt.

Mittelst einer der zur Küstenfahrt bestimmten Barken gelangte ich nach 36stündiger Fahrt von Sima aus nach der berühmten Stadt Rhodus[3] auf der Insel gleichen Namens.

Rhodus, eine alterthümliche, weltberühmte Feste, treibt bedeutenden Handel. Die Bevölkerung ist eine sehr gemischte, denn Christen, Türken, Armenier, Juden und einige Griechen wohnen dort. Die Consuln der europäischen Mächte nehmen ein besonderes von einer Festungsmauer umschlossenes Stadtviertel ein; die Juden im türkischen Stadtviertel wohnen familienweise zusammen, und es ist den Christen untersagt, diesen Stadttheil zur Nachtzeit zu betreten. Nach einem mehrtägigen Aufenthalt in Rhodus

[1] Zwanzig Stunden seewärts nördlich von Couschadassi.

[2] Benjamin de Tudela (Ausgabe von A. Asher, Berlin und London 1840, bei A. Asher) spricht S. 25 ebenfalls von Sima, wo er 300 Juden fand.

[3] Benjamin de Tudela S. 25.

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schiffte ich mich nach Alexandrien ein, um mich von dort nach Kairo zu wenden.

Meine Reise durch Egypten werde ich der Erzählung meiner Reise in Afrika anschließen, und beschränke mich hier nur auf die Mittheilung, daß ich zur See von Damiette nach Jaffa (dem alten Joppe der Hebräer) segelte, von wo aus ich meine Reise nach Jerusalem fortsetzte.

Am 7. Juni 1847 kam ich nach Alexandrien, hielt mich daselbst einige Tage auf, reiste von da nach Kairo und von dort weiter auf dem Nil nach Damiette, wo ich am 20. Juli anlangte. Nach einem kurzen Aufenthalt von einigen Tagen segelte ich nach Jaffa, woselbst ich eine zehntägige Quarantäne zu halten hatte. Die Entfernung von Jaffa nach Jerusalem beträgt nur 12 Stunden. Ich legte die Reise über Lud auf einem Kameele zurück, und erblickte am Freitag, den 14. August, Morgens 8 Uhr, die heilige Stadt Jerusalem, das Ziel meiner Sehnsucht.

Capitel 2.

Jerusalem.[1]

Ansicht der Stadt. — Gründung. — Thore. — Tempelruinen. — Tradition über den Sultan Soliman. — Grotte des Königs Hiskia.

„Wie schön sind deine Gezelte, o Jacob, deine Wohnungen, o Israel!“[2] — Mit der Erinnerung an diese Worte betrat ich den geheiligten Boden von Jerusalem. Wie sie da vor mir liegt, die einst so mächtige majestätische Stadt! Bei dem überwältigenden Anblick, bei dem Angedenken an alle die großen und herrlichen Thaten jener Tage, wo mein Volk, das erwählte des Herrn, in

[1] Die Araber und Türken nennen Jerusalem „Kodesch“, die Chaldäer und Perser „Beth-el-Mikdasch“.

[2] 4. Buch Moses Cap. 24, V. 5.

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der Fülle der Kraft und Macht dieſe Stätten bewohnte, durchziehen mein Herz Gefühle der reinſten innigſten Freude über die Vergangenheit, der tiefſten ſchmerzlichſten Wehmuth über die Gegenwart und der glaubensvollſten Zuverſicht für die Zukunft. Sie ſtimmen mich zum rührendſten Danke, ſie machen meine Thränen fließen; ich küſſe meine Mutter, den geheiligten Boden von Zion, für die Gnade, die der Herr Zebaoth mich hat erleben laſſen, denn Er hat mich geſchützt in der unwirthbaren Wildniß und mich geleitet mit ſeiner Rechten durch die weiten Wüſten Aſiens und Afrikas, auf den Wellen des Meeres bis zu Seinem Hauſe, dem Sitze Seines Ruhmes, wo nur Er regiert und angebetet wird im Glanze Seiner Herrlichkeit, wo Sein Heiligthum weit hinaus über das Weltall Seine Pracht verbreitet in dem ewigen Glanze des heiligen Glaubens. — Mit welcher Verehrung falle ich auf die Knie und bete an deinem Eingang, o Jeruſalem!

Vor meinem ſpähenden Blicke liegt ſie da, die heilige Stadt, deren Name den Erdkreis erfüllt, die in den Träumen meiner Jugend bei den Büchern der heiligen Schrift im Glanze ihres Ruhmes vor meinem Geiſte geſchwebt. — Wie tief, wie ergreifend tief iſt dein Fall, du geliebte Stadt des Ewigen, du Krone der Städte, du Königin der Nationen! — Mit welcher furchtbaren Genauigkeit ſind ſie an dir erfüllt, die Weiſſagungen und Drohungen deiner Propheten! „Wenn ich deiner nicht gedenke, o Jeruſalem, möge meine Rechte vergeſſen werden; daß meine Zunge am Gaumen haften bleibe, wenn ich mich deiner nicht ſtets erinnere, wenn ich nicht dich, o Jeruſalem, als den Hauptgegenſtand meines Jubels betrachte!“ [1]

Die Gründung von Jeruſalem wird Sem, dem Sohne Noah's zugeſchrieben,[2] der die Mauern der Stadt zu erbauen anfing. Ihr früheſter Name war Salem;[3] nachdem Abraham, als er ſeinen Sohn Iſaak zum Opfer bringen wollte, den Ort „Jire“ nannte, entſtand der Name „Jeruſalem.“[4] — Seit ſo langer Zeit war dieſe Stadt eine Reſidenz von Fürſten! — Fünfundzwanzig

[1] Pſalm 137, V. 5. 6.

[2] Seder Hadoroth Fol. 12. S. 2.

[3] 1. B. Moſes Cap. 14, V. 18.

[4] **Midraſch Rabba Cap. 56.**

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Jahre nach der Befreiung des israelitischen Volkes aus der egyptischen Dienstbarkeit beherrschte die Stadt der König Jebusse, ein Nachkomme Abimelechs, er vollendete die Mauern und erbaute daselbst eine Feste, die er Jebus nannte.[1] Erst unter David's Regierung, der mit einem Kriegsheere gegen Jerusalem und die Jebusiten zog, gelang es den Juden, sich dieser Feste zu bemächtigen.[2] Salomo begann den Tempelbau, der sieben Jahre währte, 480 Jahre nach dem Auszuge aus Egypten.[3]

Die Zerstörung des Tempels, das Loos der Juden während der ersten Zerstreuung, der Wiederaufbau und die Zerstörung des zweiten Tempels, sowie die endliche völlige Zerstreuung der Kinder Israels, sind zu allgemein bekannt, als daß ich es nöthig hätte, mich bei ihrer Schilderung aufzuhalten; nur des einen Umstandes will ich erwähnen, daß mehrere Monarchen und ein Kalif es versucht haben, das Tempelgebäude aus dem Schutte wieder aufzurichten, ohne aber damit zu Stande gekommen zu sein. Die Weissagung des königlichen Psalmisten ist erfüllt: „Da wo der Herr das Haus nicht errichtet, werden die Bauleute nichts schaffen können; wo der Herr nicht die Stadt beschützet, da wachen die Wächter ohne Erfolg!“[4]

Auch die Monumente Jerusalems sind bekannt; ich will nur weniges über die Stadtthore sagen. Jerusalem hat sechs Thore,[5] von denen fünf geöffnet sind und eins geschlossen ist; sie heißen: 1) gegen Osten das Löwenthor, nach den in der Thormauer eingehauenen Bildnissen so genannt; sein arabischer Name ist Bab-el-Schebat. 2) Im Norden das Thor von Sichem, arabisch Bab-el-Amoud. 3) Zwischen den beiden genannten ein Thor, welches geschlossen ist. 4) Gegen Westen das Thor von Hebron, jetzt das Thor von Jaffa genannt, arabisch Bab-el-Chalil. 5) Im Süden das Zionsthor, arabisch Bab el-Dahoud (Davidsthor). 6) End-

[1] Richter Cap. 19, V. 10. 11. — Seder Hadoroth Fol. 9, 26. — Josua Cap. 15, V. 8.

[2] 2. B. Samuel. Cap. 5, V. 6. 7.

[3] 1. Könige Cap. 6, V. 1.

[4] Psalm 127, V. 1.

[5] Benjamin de Tudela, S. 36, erwähnt nur vier Thore, deren einigen er andere Namen beilegt.

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lich auf derselben Seite das kleinste von allen, Bab-el-Maghrabim (Araberthor, weil die aus dem Westen von Marokko u. s. w. herkommenden Araber dort einziehen und in den angrenzenden Straßen wohnen.

Ich will über die alterthümlichen Gebäude der heiligen Stadt nur die Worte des berühmten Gelehrten Munk aus Paris wiederholen, wenn er sagt: „Es giebt keinen Stein in Jerusalem, der nicht bekannt und beschrieben wäre, und es nicht verdiente."

Der Seder Hadoroth berichtet, daß der berühmte Gelehrte Rabbi Jehuda Halevy, Verfasser des Buches Cusri, in seinem fünfzigsten Lebensjahre, etwa um das Jahr 4920, eine Wallfahrt nach Jerusalem unternommen habe und voll tiefer Wehmuth niedergefallen sei, um jeden Stein zu küssen. In frommer Begeisterung stimmte er ein Klagelied an, das mit dem Worte Zion begann. — Dieser Gesang wird noch heute von den Juden am Gedächtnißtage der Zerstörung Jerusalems gesungen. — Ein fanatischer Araber, der den frommen Rabbi sah und hörte, ritt in voller Wuth auf ihn zu, und der begeisterte Sänger erlag unter den Hufschlägen des Rosses.

Der Tempel.

Ich beginne meine fromme Wallfahrt durch die heilige Stadt mit den verehrungswürdigen Ueberresten des Tempels, die Jahrtausenden getrotzt haben und darum gewiß den ersten Platz verdienen.

Eine unter meinen daselbst wohnenden Glaubensgenossen allgemein verbreitete Volkssage verdient hier vorab mitgetheilt zu werden.

Unter den Monarchen, welche den Wiederaufbau des Tempels versuchten, war auch Sultan Soliman,[1] der um 5280 (1520 nach Christo) über Jerusalem herrschte. Er errichtete die Mauern der Stadt, baute Wasserleitungen, und nahm seine Residenz in einem

[1] Sohn des Salim I., auch Sliman Aben Olim genannt, er regierte 46 J.

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südlich vom Tempel gelegenen Gebäude, welches noch heute Medrasch Salomo (wissenschaftliches Gebäude Salomo's) heißt. Später bewohnte Soliman ein Gebäude im Westen des Tempels, in welchem nachher die Türken ihre Gerichtshöfe (Machkimä) hatten. Den Tempelplatz und die Ruinen des Heiligthums bedeckte damals ein Berg von Schutt und Dünger. Eines Tages bemerkte — so erzählt die Sage — der Sultan eine in alte Lumpen gehüllte Frau, die mühsam einen Sack voll Schutt heranschleppte und diesen auf der Anhöhe neben seinem Palaste ausleerte. Zornig befahl der Sultan, die Alte zu ergreifen und vor ihn zu führen. Matt und erschöpft erschien sie. Nachdem Soliman sie befragt, woher sie sei und zu welchem Volke sie gehöre, verlangte er zu wissen, warum sie den Sack an jenem Platze ausgeschüttet habe. Zitternd antwortete die Alte: „Zürne mir nicht, mächtiger Herrscher, keineswegs dachte ich dich zu beleidigen, indem ich eine alte Sitte meines Volkes beachtete. Seit der Einnahme Jerusalems durch den römischen Imperator Titus hat man es niemals vermocht, die Mauern des Tempels gänzlich zu vernichten; die Priester und Wahrsager der Römer befahlen daher, daß alle Einwohner der Stadt täglich einen Sack mit Schutt auf diesen Platz tragen sollten, ein Gebot, dem selbst die Bewohner der Umgegend nachkommen mußten, indem für die näher Wohnenden zweimal in der Woche, für die Entfernteren zweimal in jedem Monat ein Gleiches verordnet wurde. Der Platz, wo so viele Römer gefallen, sollte vom Boden verschwinden. Zürne darum nicht, o Herr, deiner Magd, die nur dem Gesetze gefolgt!"

Soliman ließ jedoch die Alte ins Gefängniß führen; den Platz aber ließ er, um sich von der Wahrheit zu überzeugen, mit Wachen umstellen, denen befohlen wurde, alle zu verhaften, die dort Schutt oder Dünger ausleeren wollten. — Als sich nun die Aussage jener Alten bestätigte, ergriff den Sultan das Verlangen, zu wissen, was jener Platz enthalte. Er selbst nahm eine Schaufel und einen Korb, bestieg die Anhöhe und fing an zu graben, indem er zugleich Alle, die ihm ergeben seien, auffordern ließ, seinem Beispiele zu folgen. Männer und Weiber aus allen Ständen strömten herbei und begannen den Schutt wegzuräumen. Dreißig Tage lang waren Tausende mit dieser Arbeit beschäftigt,

und täglich ließ der Sultan heimlich Geld in den Schutt werfen, um ihren Eifer zu beleben. Endlich entdeckte man die Ruinen des Tempels; man stieß auf eine lange Mauer, die noch heute zu sehen ist, und den Namen Cothel Maaravi[1] (westliche Tempelmauer) führt. — Während der Abräumung des Platzes waren wiederum viele mit Körben und Säcken voll Schutt angekommen, wurden jedoch ergriffen und zu den übrigen ins Gefängniß geworfen. Nach vollendeter Arbeit ließ Soliman die Gefangenen vor sich bringen, und um sie für die Entweihung des Tempels zu strafen, dreißig Männer und acht Weiber durch das Loos aus ihnen herausnehmen und an der Mauer erhängen; zugleich verbot er, den Platz ferner zu verunreinigen, jedem Uebertreter gleiche Strafe androhend.

Hierauf ließ der Sultan die Juden vor seinen Thron bescheiden und redete sie mit folgenden Worten des Trostes an: „Einer Eingebung von oben folgend, habe ich gethan, was ihr gesehn; durch mich soll der Tempel in neuem Glanze erstehen; denn auch ich heiße Salomo, wie der erste Gründer dieses Heiligthums. Da jedoch der Platz euer Eigenthum ist, so ist es an euch, den Bau zu vollführen, zu welchem ich die Mittel anbiete.“ — Beim Anhören dieser Worte vergossen die unglücklichen Juden Thränen und schwiegen. — Soliman aber fragte: „Warum weinet ihr? Freut euch, denn euer Gott hat euch nicht vergessen.“ — Ein Greis aber nahte sich dem Herrscher und sprach zu ihm: „Möge dein Leben lange währen, o Herr! wir werden den Ewigen preisen, der dir so huldvolle Gedanken gegeben, unsern einzigen Ruhm

[1] Benjamin de Tudela, S. 36, erwähnt diese Mauer; da er jedoch im 12ten Jahrhundert die Stätte besuchte, so muß jedenfalls jene Verschüttung in den nach ihm folgenden drei Jahrhunderten geschehen sein, oder die ganze Geschichte wäre nicht richtig. Benjamin de Tudela sagt, in dieser Mauer befindet sich das Thor Schaare Rachmim (Thor der Barmherzigkeit), woselbst die Juden ihr Gebet zu verrichten pflegten. Rabbi Pethachia aus Regensburg, der dem Benjamin de Tudela, wie Ritter in seiner Erdkunde (Band 4, S. 1417) sagt, nur zwei Jahre später folgte, spricht in seiner Reisebeschreibung (Lubliner Ausgabe mit lateinischer Uebersetzung, S. 198 und 199) ebenfalls von dem Thore der Barmherzigkeit, welches jedoch der Mauer des Westens gegenüber nach der Seite des Oelbergs liegt. Letztere Angabe ist die richtige.

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und Stolz wieder herstellen zu wollen; doch den Schriften gemäß sollen wir den Tempel nicht selbst wieder errichten; Gott nur kann ihn erbauen." [1]

„So wollt ihr den Tempel nicht wieder aufbauen?" rief der Sultan, „und doch sagt Salomo in seinem Einweihungsgebete dieses Heiligthums: „„Wenn ein Fremdling, der nicht von den Eurigen ist, von dem auserwählten Volke, vom fernen Lande kommen wird: wenn dieser Fremdling an diesem Orte, durch euern Ruhm und eure Herrlichkeit angezogen, sein Gebet verrichten wird, so mögest Du Herr in Deinen Himmelshöhen ihn erhören, und Du mögest Alles erfüllen, was dieser Fremdling von Dir erfleht!"" [2] Ich selbst werde das Haus Gottes wieder erbauen, und nur ihm soll es geweiht sein."

Soliman ließ sich den Plan des ersten Tempels geben, um danach den dritten zu errichten, ein Unternehmen, welches jedoch unausgeführt blieb. Unter seiner Regierung hatten die Juden gleiche Rechte mit den übrigen Völkern seines Reiches und lebten glücklich.

Ich habe die Mittheilung der obigen Volkssage nur deshalb für geeignet gehalten, weil sie zeigt, wie sehr noch Glauben und Hoffen an eine bessere Zukunft die Herzen meines Volkes erfüllt.[3]

Am östlichen Ende Jerusalems, der Seite des Oelbergs gegenüber, liegt der Platz des Tempels, im Südosten der heutigen Stadt. Im Norden und Westen erheben sich die großen Gebäude, welche die Mauer des Westens (Cothel Maaravi) berühren und den Platz von allen Seiten umgeben. Die Juden von Jerusalem verrichten in der Nähe dieser Gegend am Freitag Nachmittag und am Vorabend der hohen Feste ihr Vespergebet (Mincha). Niemand aber darf das Innere des Platzes betreten, der von den Türken

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[1] Die letzten Worte des Greises beziehen sich auf das Hohelied Salomo's, Cap. 2, V. 7. — Midrasch Rabba Fol. 11, S. 1. — Meiner Ansicht nach sieht man im Talmud Jeruschalmi, Messechet Maassir Scheni, Cap. 5, V. 2, daß der dritte Tempel wie der zweite erbaut werden soll und daß die dem jüdischen Volke zugethanen Monarchen diesen Tempel errichten werden.

[2] 1. Könige Cap. 8, V. 41—43.

[3] Diese Sage fand ich auch in Chibath Jerusalem (erschienen 5604 zu Jerusalem) aufgeführt, wahrscheinlich ebenfalls der Tradition nach erzählt.

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strenge bewacht wird. Am Orte des Allerheiligsten erhebt sich ein prächtiges, von Soliman errichtetes Gebäude, den religiösen Feierlichkeiten der Muselmänner gewidmet. Es soll sich dort eine Höhle befinden, von der man noch heute nicht weiß, was sie enthält. Die Juden behaupten, es sei darin die heilige Lade mit Reliquien verborgen.[1] Die ersten türkischen Beherrscher wollten sie untersuchen lassen, als jedoch die dazu Ausgesandten hineintraten, traf sie der Tod, und so sind alle ferneren Forschungen unterblieben.

Der Medrasch Salomo's, ein von diesem Könige errichtetes Gebäude, ist der Ort, wo der Sage nach die Juden den Sanhedrin (hohes Justiz-Tribunal) errichtet hatten. Im Norden und Westen führen zwei Eingänge zu demselben; die südliche Seite zeichnet sich durch viele Fenster aus. Der Weg von diesem Gebäude bis zum Tempel führt durch eine Baumallee, die mit einem Wassergraben umzogen ist. Die Araber betreten diesen Weg nur mit entblößten Füßen, da sie den Boden für heilig halten; sie bringen ihre Todten vor der Beerdigung dorthin, um sie vor dem göttlichen Gericht zu schützen. — Im Westen des Tempels befindet sich ein Graben, der von den Arabern Bir-el-dam (Blutgraben) genannt wird; sie glauben, daß dort das Blut der Brandopfer vergossen wurde. Neben diesem Graben hat Nebusaradan, wie die Sage geht, ein Hauptmann Nebucadnezar's, viele Kinder, jüdische Mütter und Priester schlachten lassen, um das unschuldige Blut des Zacharias, Sohnes des Priesters Jehojada, zu rächen.

Außerhalb der Stadt, jedoch innerhalb der Ringmauern, an der Nordseite, befindet sich die auf Befehl des Königs Hiskia gegrabene Höhle. Man sagt: Zedekkia, Juda's letzter König, sei durch sie entflohen, um nicht in die Hände der Chaldäer zu fallen. Die Höhle liegt in der Nähe des Thores Bab-el-Amoud und soll nach der Versicherung einiger Juden so geräumig sein, daß ein Mann zu Pferde sich darin aufrecht erhalten kann. Auch erzählt man, es sei in derselben ein in Stein gehauenes viereckiges Zimmer vorhanden, welches zu einer Synagoge bestimmt gewesen, und in der Wand dieses Zimmers sei eine geschriebene Pentateuchrolle eingemauert; doch ist es untersagt, dort Nachforschungen

[1] Messechet Jauma S. 54.

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anzustellen. Durch einen Riß im Felsen, den die Zeit gebildet, konnte ich etwas vom Innern dieser Höhle erblicken.

Am Fuße des Oelberges, dem Tempel gegenüber, ist das von einer Mauer umgebene Grab Mariä, der Mutter Christi.

In Jerusalem selbst befindet sich das Grab Christi,[1] zu welchem große Schaaren von christlichen Pilgern aus allen Ländern der Welt wallfahrten. Namentlich zur Osterzeit sind die Straßen der Stadt mit Wallfahrern angefüllt. — Als ein besonderes Zeichen von Intoleranz im 19. Jahrhundert führe ich noch an, daß kein Jude bei Lebensgefahr es wagen darf, den Straßendurchgang, der zur Grabeskirche führt, zu betreten.

Jeden Freitag Vormittag 11 Uhr geht der Scheik mit einigen Hasie von der Moschee von Zion aus unter Absingung von Gebeten durch die Stadt bis auf den Tempelplatz, wo er einen Gottesdienst abhält, welcher eine Stunde währt, während welcher Zeit sämmtliche Thore von Jerusalem streng geschlossen sind.

Jerusalem, einst so blühend und volkreich, dann eine lange Zeit zerstört und einsam, ist jetzt von Menschen aus allen Zonen bewohnt. Ich werde im letzten Capitel von Palästina über dieselben berichten.

Wir aber hoffen, daß, so wie alle Worte des Herrn an Salomo und die Propheten erfüllt sind, dereinst auch die Prophezeiungen des Propheten Jesaias (Cap. 2, V. 2) über Jerusalem und seine Zukunft in Erfüllung gehen werden.

Capitel 3.

Zion.

Auf dem Berge Zion steht ein altes Bauwerk, unter welchem sich der Eingang einer Höhle findet, welche sich bis in das Innere der Stadt Jerusalem, wo man einen daselbst liegenden großen Stein als ihren Ausgangspunkt bezeichnet, erstrecken soll. In

[1] Benjamin de Tudela S. 35 erwähnt das Grab.

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dieser Höhle soll die Grabstätte mehrerer Könige des Davidischen Hauses sein. Die mahomedanischen Pilger verrichten in dem Gebäude über der Höhle ihre Gebete. Zuweilen verstattet man auch den Juden, an diesem muthmaßlichen Orte der Ueberreste ihrer dahingeschiedenen Könige zu beten, für welche Erlaubniß sie eine Abgabe von einem Piaster zahlen.

Im Jahre 4915 (1155), so wird erzählt,[1] versuchte es ein Bischof, diesem geweihten Orte Steine zu entnehmen, um mit denselben eine verfallene Kirche wiederherzustellen. Eines Tages kamen zwei der angestellten Arbeiter nicht zur festgesetzten Zeit zur Arbeit und der Meister befahl ihnen, das Versäumte in den Feierstunden nachzuholen. Beim Graben entdeckten diese beiden Männer einen großen Marmorstein, den sie seiner Schwere wegen kaum von der Stelle rücken konnten. Als dies endlich nach vieler Anstrengung gelang, fanden sie unter demselben den Eingang zu einer großen Höhle. Neugierig wollten sie in dieselbe hineindringen, wurden jedoch durch einen starken Windstoß ohnmächtig zu Boden geworfen und so von ihren Mitarbeitern gefunden. Der Bischof, dem die Sache sofort gemeldet wurde, ließ die beiden Männer vor sich kommen und erfuhr von ihnen, daß sie in der Höhle zwei goldene Tische bemerkt hätten, auf denen Krone, Scepter, Schwert und andere Königsinsignien ausgebreitet waren, daß sie aber nicht in die Höhle hineinzudringen vermocht, sondern am Eingang bewußtlos umgesunken seien. Der Bischof ließ darauf den Eingang wieder vermauern. — Der Josiphun, welchen die Israeliten dem Flavius Josephus zuschreiben, berichtet, daß dort Salomo seine Schätze verborgen habe. Hircan und Herodes der Große bemächtigten sich der Gräber der Könige von Juda und verwandten von den Schätzen einen großen Theil zu ihrem Gebrauch.

Am Fuße des Zionsberges liegt ein Thal, von wo aus man einen andern Berg ersteigt; dort fand man ein in den Felsen gehauenes Haus. Ueber dem Eingange desselben befindet sich eine unleserliche Inschrift, von der die dortigen Juden behaupten, daß

[1] Benjamin de Tudela S. 38 u. 39 erzählt diese Begebenheit mit einigen kleineren Abänderungen.

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sie folgende Worte enthalte: „Dieses Gebäude wurde unter der Regierung unsers Königs Salomo errichtet.“

Har Hassethim (der Oelberg) erhebt sich im Osten der Stadt, von welcher er durch das Thal Josaphat getrennt ist. Vom Gipfel dieses Berges aus hat man eine ansehnliche Aussicht. Man erblickt Jerusalem, den Tempelplatz, den Jordan, das todte Meer, die Gebirge von Garizim und Ebal. Auf dem Berge selbst liegt ein Dörfchen und ungefähr eine halbe Stunde weit davon befindet sich in einer Höhle das Grab der Prophetin Hulda,[1] welche die Bibel erwähnt.[2]

Weiter hinab nach der Stadt, etwa in der Mitte des Berges, liegt eine andere, aus mehren Abtheilungen bestehende Höhle, welche die Gräber der Propheten Hagai, Zachariä und Maleachi enthält, die von den Juden häufig besucht werden. Am Fuße des Berges ist ein jüdischer Begräbnißplatz und, wie die Sage berichtet, befindet sich daselbst das Grab des Zacharias, Sohnes des Priesters Jehojada,[3] auf dem sich ein pyramidenförmiger Leichenstein ohne Inschrift befindet, sowie das Haus Bethachaphschith, wohin der mit Aussatz geschlagene König Usia verwiesen wurde.[4]

Chazzar Hamathara (Gefängnißort)[5] liegt im Norden der Stadt; es befindet sich dort eine tiefe Grube, zu welcher man nur mit vielen Schwierigkeiten gelangen kann. In dieser wurde nach der Volkssage Jeremias von dem Könige von Juda gefangen gehalten. Der Hof des Gefängnißorts enthält mehrere in Stein ausgehauene Häuschen und Zimmer, die zu Gefängnissen benutzt wurden. Mehre alte Gebäude an diesem Orte sollen nach der Behauptung der dortigen Bewohner die Gräber der Propheten Jesaias und Jeremias bedecken, wovon ich jedoch bei genauer Nachforschung keine Spur entdecken konnte.

[1] Der Talmud spricht gegen diese Angabe, indem er behauptet, sie sei bei den Stadtmauern begraben worden. Tosephta Baba Batra Cap. 1, und Messechet Semachot Cap. 14. Ueberhaupt glaubt der Verfasser, daß es noch sehr der Untersuchung bedürfe, ob auch andere Gräber sich wirklich an den Plätzen befinden, die ihnen vom Volke jetzt angewiesen werden.

[2] 2. Könige Cap. 22, V. 14. — 2. Chronica Cap. 34, V. 22.

[3] 2. Chronica Cap. 24, V. 20. 21.

[4] 2. Buch der Könige Cap. 15, V. 5.

[5] Jeremias Cap. 38, V. 13.

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Im Norden der Stadt erhebt sich eine ansehnliche Felsengruppe nebst einem Hofe, zu dem man von der südlichen Seite aus eintritt. Zwei Bäume ragen daraus empor, von denen der eine Datteln, der andere eine Frucht, die man Tuth nennt, trägt. Hier befindet sich wieder eine bedeutende, aus mehren Abtheilungen bestehende Höhle. Beim Eintritt in dieselbe gelangt man zunächst in ein großes Zimmer, welches zu zwei kleineren führt, diese führen dann in ein noch größeres Gemach, dem wiederum zwei kleinere folgen. In einem kleinen nördlich gelegenen Zimmer bedeckt ein Grabstein den Platz, an welchem der Sage nach einer der reichsten Männer Jerusalems, Calbe Sewua, der zur Zeit des zweiten Tempels lebte, ruhen soll. Man erzählt von vielen Wundern, die sich hier zugetragen haben sollen. — Während meines Aufenthalts in Jerusalem im Jahre 1847 im M. Ellul ließ der Pascha vielfache Nachgrabungen daselbst anstellen, um einen Schatz zu entdecken, den man dort vergraben glaubte. — Diese Felsengebäude erregen wegen ihrer ungewöhnlichen Größe die vorzügliche Aufmerksamkeit der Reisenden.

Eine Stunde weiter nordwärts von der Stadt findet man eine Höhle, die drei besondere mit einander verbundene Zimmer enthält. Im ersten dieser Zimmer rieselt eine Quelle, die zuweilen versiegt, das zweite enthält zwei Gräber und im dritten ist das Grab Simon's ha Zadik (des Gerechten), des letzten der Mitglieder des Kenesseth-Hagdola (große Versammlung)[1], welche vor ihm von Esra zusammenberufen war. Die beiden Grabmale im zweiten Zimmer sind die der Söhne Simon's. — Eine halbe Stunde von diesem Orte entfernt, trifft man wieder eine in vier Abtheilungen getheilte Höhle, von denen die eine zur Rechten, die andere zur Linken und die übrigen zwei unter der Erde liegen; hier sollen die berühmten Männer des Sanhedrin ruhen.

Rama. Zwei Stunden nordwestlich von Jerusalem erhebt sich ein Berg, auf welchem in einer Grotte das Grab des Propheten Samuel[2] gezeigt wird, rechts davon ist das Grab seiner Eltern. Beim Hinabsteigen von diesem Berge kommt man zu

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[1] Messechet Awoth Cap. 1. — Mischna 1.
[2] 1. Samuel. Cap. 25, V. 1.

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einer kleineren Grotte, von der eine Quelle murmelnd sich ergießt; dort soll nach der Sage das Bad Hanah, der Mutter Samuels, gewesen sein. Die Juden, wie auch andere Landesbewohner, wallfahrten nach dieser Stätte, die arabisch Ziara genannt wird, und zahlen beim Eintritt einen Piaster für diese Erlaubniß.

Zwei Stunden südlich von Jerusalem, auf dem Wege nach Hebron, liegt eine kleine Festung Burak; neben dem Thore derselben befinden sich drei Teiche zum Auffangen und Bewahren des Regenwassers. In der Nähe dieser Festung steht an einer Quelle ein Haus, das König Salomo erbaut haben soll. — Eine halbe Meile weiter südlich[1] kommt man zu dem Grabe Rahel's. Wie Benjamin de Tudela[2] berichtet, sind über diesem Grabe mehrere Monumente errichtet worden, von denen das erste ein von elf Säulen getragenes Gewölbe bildet.[3] Mahomed Pascha ließ im Jahre 5385 ein anderes errichten und das jetzige verdankt man der Frömmigkeit des Moses Montefiore. Die Juden pilgern oft zu diesem Grabmale ihrer Stammmutter, und namentlich kommen am 15. Cheswan (November), dem Todestage Rahel's, Viele dorthin, um ihre Gebete zu verrichten.

Zwei Stunden von Hebron liegt das Dorf Halhoul, wo sich die Gräber der Propheten Nathan und Gad befinden. Dieses Dorf führt noch heute seinen alten biblischen Namen.[4]

Eine halbe Stunde von Hebron zeigt man noch das Fundament eines Hauses, welches einst Abraham bewohnt haben soll. Auch zeigt man daneben eine Quelle, welche Sarah's Brunnen genannt wird, da man sie für ein Bad der Sarah hält. Manche Jüdinnen benutzen dieselbe noch heute.[5] — Die Araber der

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[1] 1. Buch Moses Cap. 48, V. 7 und Cap. 35, V. 19.

[2] Benjamin de Tudela S. 40.

[3] Rabbi Pethachia (S. 196) erzählt ebenfalls von dem Grabmale Rahel's, welches 11 Steine, nach den 11 Stämmen, bildeten. Adiit porro sepulchrum Rachelis in Ephrata, quae dimidii diei itinere Hierosolimis distat, illi monumento undecim lapides impositi sunt, secundum numerum undecim Tribunum etc.

[4] Josua Cap. 15, V. 58.

[5] Benjamin de Tudela S. 42: Zu seiner Zeit stand noch ein Haus dort, während jetzt nur die Grundmauern zu sehen sind. — Er spricht auch

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Gegend haben, wie mir mitgetheilt wurde, den Baum, unter dem Abraham saß, als die Engel zu ihm traten,[1] vor wenigen Jahren abgehauen.[2]

Capitel 4.

Hebron (von den Arabern Chalil genannt).

Gründung der Stadt. — Grotte und Gräber der Patriarchen. — Drei andere Grotten.

Hebron, ehemals Kiriath Arba[3] genannt, war zur Zeit der Eroberung des gelobten Landes durch Josua die Hauptstadt eines kleinen Königreiches.[4] Der Tradition zufolge wohnte dort eine Riesenfamilie von vier Personen, ein Vater und drei Söhne. Der Beherrscher des Landes nannte sich Arba.[5] — Der Talmud (Eruben S. 53) erklärt den Namen Kiriath Arba dadurch, daß dort vier Paare begraben liegen, nämlich Adam und Eva, Abraham und Sarah, Isaac und Rebecca, Jacob und Lea; denn das hebräische „Arba" heißt „vier."

Der Seder Hadoroth berichtet (S. 11), Hebron sei zur Zeit der Menschenzerstreuung beim babylonischen Thurmbau gegründet worden, auch die Bibel setzt die Gründung der Stadt bis in die älteste Vorzeit.[6] Sie lag ehemals auf einem Hügel, wo der Reisende noch heute Ruinen findet.[7] Die neu erbaute Stadt erhebt sich rings um die von den Arabern Halil genannte Höhle

von einer Quelle, benennt sie aber nicht. — Rabbi Pethachia (S. 199), der ebenfalls von dieser Quelle spricht, nennt sie mit dem obigen Namen.

[1] 1. B. Moses Cap. 18, V. 4.

[2] Rabbi Pethachia spricht S. 199 von diesem Baume.

[3] Richter Cap. 1, V. 10.

[4] Josua Cap. 10, V. 3.

[5] Josua Cap. 14, V. 15, nach Abarbanels Erklärung.

[6] 4. Buch Moses Cap. 13, V. 22.

[7] Benjamin de Tudela S. 40 spricht ebenfalls von diesen Ruinen.

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Machpelo, welche sich auf der Straße Rachman befindet. Die Bibel berichtet, Hebron sei früher von Weingärten rings umgeben worden, noch heute findet man dasselbe, da namentlich die Araber der Umgegend viele Weinberge pflegen.

Ueber der Höhle erhebt sich ein prächtiges Gebäude, dessen Grundstein der Sage nach vom König Salomo selbst gelegt sein soll. Esther, Königin von Persien, soll das Monument restaurirt haben und die Königin Helena ließ dasselbe so wieder herstellen, wie es noch heute ist. — Rings um die Höhle ist zu besonderem Schutze nochmals eine Mauer gezogen. Das Innere enthält zwei Moscheen, deren eine bei dem Grabe Abraham's den Namen St. Abraham, die andere bei dem Grabe Jacob's den Namen St. Jacob führt. — Der Besuch dieser Moscheen, die von den Türken aufs höchste verehrt werden, wird keinem Ungläubigen gestattet.[1] Im Jahre 1833 jedoch gelang es einem jüdischen Kaufmanne aus Rußland, Namens Schmerl Arlick, durch große Geschenke, die er dem Scheik machte, die Moscheen über der Grotte in der zweiten Hälfte der Nacht besuchen zu dürfen. Seiner Versicherung nach sind sie im Innern mit der größten Pracht ausgestattet, von unzähligen Lichtern beleuchtet, die in den goldenen und silbernen Zierrathen mit magischem Glanze wiederstrahlen. Durch zwei Fenster im Boden der Moschee sieht man in die Grotte hinab. Bei Tagesanbruch mußte sich der Besucher, aus Furcht, trotz seiner Verkleidung in türkische Priestertracht erkannt zu werden, zurückziehen.[2]

Außerhalb der Stadt in der Richtung nach Jerusalem liegen drei Brunnen, die, wie die Bibel berichtet, von Abraham gegründet sein sollen. Wenn man von der Patriarchengrotte aus auf die Straße zugeht, die zum jüdischen Viertel führt, so findet man links auf dem Hofe ein türkisches Wohnhaus und neben demselben eine kleine Grotte, zu welcher einige Treppen hinabführen: hier ist das Grabmal Abner's, Hauptmanns des Königs Saul.[3] Sie

[1] Neben dem Eingange der Moschee von St. Abraham ist ein besonderer Platz bestimmt, wo die Juden und Christen ihre Gebete verrichten dürfen.

[2] Rabbi Pethachia (S. 197 u. 198) spricht von der Höhle; er war in derselben.

[3] 2. Samuel. Cap. 3, V. 32; Cap. 4, V. 1.

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wird von den Arabern sehr in Ehren gehalten und der Eigenthümer sorgt dafür, daß sie stets anständig ausgestattet ist. Er fordert von den Besuchern ein kleines Eintrittsgeld.

Ebenfalls außerhalb der Stadt, an der südlichen Seite, befindet sich in einem von den Juden angekauften Weinberge das Grab des ersten Richters, Othniel, Kena's Sohn, und im Osten des Weinberges in einer Höhle das Grab des Vaters von König David.

Capitel 5.

Sichem. — Samarien. — Zephath. — Miron.

Eine Stunde östlich von Sichem,[1] nahe dem Dorfe Ablanuta, liegt das Grab Joseph's und seiner beiden Söhne Ephraim und Menasse.[2] Die Grabmäler befinden sich auf dem Felde, welches Jacob dem Könige von Sichem abkaufte, in dessen Nähe eine Quelle, „Ein Jacob" genannt, von den Arabern gleichlautend Beir Jacob (Jacobs-Quelle) bezeichnet, vorüberrieselt.[3]

Wie Midrasch Rabba 1. Buch, Cap. 100 berichtet, hatten die Kinder Israels bei ihrem Auszuge aus Aegypten die sterblichen Ueberreste der Stammväter ihrer Geschlechter in Särgen mitgenommen und begruben nach der Theilung des gelobten Landes durch Josua einen jeden in dem Landestheile, der seinen Nachkommen zugefallen war. Der Verfasser, der sich an Ort und Stelle überzeugt, daß diese Sage auf wahrem Grunde beruht, schaltet hier, die Autorität des Midrasch Rabba als Leitfaden benutzend, die betreffenden Angaben über die Gräber der zwölf Stammväter

[1] Abbé Barges, Professor an der Sorbonne zu Paris, der im Jahre 1853 das heilige Land besuchte, giebt in einer Episode aus seiner Reise unter dem Titel „Les Samaritains de Naplouse" (Paris 1855) geistreiche und klare Forschungen über das alte Sichem, über die Samaritaner, ihren Cultus und ihre Schriftsprache, die namentlich in letzterer Beziehung von dem größten Werthe sind.

[2] Josua Cap. 24 u. 32.

[3] Vergl. Barges „Les Samaritains de Naplouse" S. 10 u. 11.

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ein, indem er sich, was die Mittheilung des Lebensalters derselben betrifft, auf den Seder Olam Zuta (kleinen Seder Olam) stützt.

1) Ruben lebte 124 Jahre, wurde in Rumia jenseit des Jordans begraben.
2) Gad, 125 Jahre, an demselben Orte begraben wie Ruben.
3) Simon, 120 Jahre; sein Grab befindet sich in dem Dorfe Manda.
4) Levy, 134 Jahre, ebendaselbst begraben.
5) Jehuda, 129 Jahre, begraben in dem Dorfe Babi, nahe bei Bethlehem.
6) Isaschar, 122 Jahre, liegt in Sidon begraben.
7) Sebulon, 124 Jahre, liegt daselbst.
8) Dan, 127 Jahre, beerdigt im Lande Aestaël.
9) Naphtali, 132 Jahre, beerdigt in Kadesch-Naphtali.
10) Ascher, 126 Jahre, ruht im Erblande seiner Kinder.
11) Joseph,[1] 110 Jahre, wie oben angegeben.
12) Benjamin, 111 Jahre, in der Umgegend Zions (Jebussi, alter Name für Zion); Ort unbekannt.

Die Reihenfolge der Namen ist hier nicht nach ihrer Geburt angegeben, sondern nach ihren Gräbern, von denen einige noch heute mit Denkmälern bezeichnet sind, die bei den Türken in hoher Achtung stehen.

Nördlich von Sichem und vier Stunden von demselben entfernt liegt der Ort Dothan,[2] in dessen Nähe sich eine Cisterne befindet, die nach der Sage dieselbe sein soll, in welche einst die Söhne Jacob's ihren Bruder Joseph geworfen.[3] Dieser von den Arabern Gub Joseph genannte Ort ist mit einem durch vier Marmorsäulen getragenen Gebäude bedeckt. Gegenüber demselben ist eine Moschee und ein Funduk (Gasthaus) errichtet.

In Samarien, auch Sabdia genannt, das der Ortssage zufolge die einst so berühmte Stadt Somrom sein soll, zeigt man in der Umgegend zerstreut die Gräber mehrerer Könige Israels.

Ein und eine halbe Tagereise von Sichem aus gelangt man

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[1] Genesis Cap. 50, V. 26.
[2] 1. B. Moses Cap. 37, V. 17.
[3] Genesis Cap. 37, V. 24.

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zur Stadt Tiberias, die von einigen Talmudisten Reket, von andern Hamath (heiße Wasser) benannt wird;[1] in der Bibel findet man beide Namen.[2] Nach dem Talmud ist die Stadt früher eine äußerst wichtige gewesen.[3] In der Umgegend von Tiberias befinden sich zahlreiche Gräber von Talmudisten. Im Jahre 1837 wurden Tiberias und Zephath durch ein Erdbeben verwüstet; das schrecklichste Unglück jedoch traf sie am 8. Sivan 1834, der mit Recht als ein Trauertag in den Jahrbüchern von Palästina verzeichnet ist. Die Drusen vom Libanon überfielen die Stadt Zephath und plünderten sie dreiunddreißig Tage lang; die Synagogen wurden zerstört und die Gesetzesrollen vernichtet. Das Wort des Propheten Jeremias war in Erfüllung gegangen.[4] — Die Juden hatten sich in die Gebirge gerettet. — Die Bewohner von Tiberias, die ein gleiches Schicksal fürchteten, sandten eine Deputation an die Plünderer und erkauften mittelst eines Lösegeldes ihre Schonung.

Durch das Erdbeben im Jahre 1837 wurden Tiberias und Zephath fast ganz zerstört. Viele hundert Juden und eine große Anzahl Mahomedaner kamen dabei um; nur wenige vermochten sich in die Gebirge zu flüchten, und diese verbrachten dort eine Nacht voll Furcht und Schrecken, aus der Ferne das Angst- und Wehegeschrei der Ihrigen hörend, denen sie nicht zu helfen vermochten. Am andern Tage erst wagten sie sich zu der Unglücksstätte, wo sich ihnen ein grauenvoller Anblick darbot; unter dem Schutt und den Trümmern der Stadt lagen die schrecklich verstümmelten Leichname ihrer Verwandten und Freunde, einzelne wenige nur wurden noch lebend hervorgezogen, waren jedoch meist so entstellt, daß sie die Todten um ihr Schicksal beneideten. Keine Familie war da, die nicht den Verlust eines der Ihrigen zu beweinen hatte. Doch hörte man kein Murren; den Fügungen des Ewigen ergeben, sprachen sie: „Der Herr hat es gegeben, der Herr hat es genommen, sein Name sei gelobt.“[5]

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[1] Messechet Megila Fol. 5, S. 2, und Fol. 8, S. 1.

[2] Josua Cap. 19, V. 35.

[3] Tractat Barachot Cap. 1.

[4] Jeremias Cap. 14, V. 17—18.

[5] Job Cap. 1, V. 21.

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Zephath liegt am Fuße eines Berges und ist nur noch ein Haufen von Ruinen, unter denen einige Festungswerke und Häuser hervorragen. Unten am Berge befindet sich eine große Höhle, von den Arabern Maarath Jacob genannt, wo der Sage nach Jacob den Verlust seines Sohnes beweint haben soll. Südwestlich von diesem Berge ist noch eine andere Höhle mit einer Quelle, welche letztere Avlad Jacob (Kinder Jacob's) genannt wird. In der Umgegend findet man die Gräber mehrer Talmudisten, und auf dem Begräbnißplatze der Juden in der Nähe der Stadt zeigt man die Gräber des Propheten Hosea und seines Vaters Beeri, beide mit einem Grabsteine versehen.

Zwei Stunden von Zephath gelangt man zu dem Dorfe Mirom, und eine halbe Stunde von diesem Dorfe bemerkt man einen weitläufigen von einer Mauer umschlossenen Hof, auf dem sich neben einem prachtvollen Baume ein alterthümliches Gebäude befindet. Das Gebäude enthält einen großen Saal und zwei kleinere Gemächer, in deren einem das Grab des berühmten Talmudisten Rabbi Simon, Sohn Jochais, sich befindet,[1] in dem andern das Grab seines Sohnes, des Rabbi Eleazar. Jährlich am 18. Jjar (Mai) findet dort eine große Festlichkeit statt. Viele Tausende von jüdischen Pilgern aus Palästina, Syrien, Persien, Afrika und andern fernen Ländern, die einige Tage vor dem Feste angekommen, lagern in Zelten rings umher, während die Rabbinen das Gräberhaus und die angrenzenden Gebäude einnehmen. Der Gottesdienst, der in der Nacht vom 17. auf den 18. Jjar beginnt, wird mit der Vorlesung des Werkes Sohar, welches man dem Rabbi Simon zuschreibt, eingeleitet. Mitten in der Nacht stimmt man Lobgesänge an, und der Jubel wird so lebhaft, daß er sogar zu Tänzen übergeht, die bis zum Anbruch des Tages fortdauern. Bis in das Innere des Hofes hinab unter freiem Himmel und bei den Gräbern anderer Talmudisten, die sich in der Nähe befinden, bei denen dieselbe Feier stattfindet, sieht und hört man dieselbe Festlichkeit. — Der zu diesen Cere-

[1] Benjamin de Tudela S. 45 spricht von diesem Dorfe und verschiedenen Gräbern der Talmudisten, die sich in der Umgegend befinden; jedoch erwähnt er des oben besprochenen Grabes gar nicht.

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monien bestimmte Tag, der 18. Jjar, ist der Sterbetag des Rabbi Simon. Zur Erhöhung der Feier werden eine große Anzahl Lampen angezündet, und namentlich hat man zu diesem Zwecke in dem ersten Gemache des Hauses eine colossale Lampe aufgestellt, die wol 100 Maß Oel fassen zu können scheint. Das Anzünden dieser Lampe, das man Hadlaka di Rabbi Simon nennt, wird für ein besonderes Vorrecht gehalten, welches sogar meistbietend verkauft wird. Die Beleuchtung mittelst kleiner Lampen nennt man Hadlaka di Rabbi Eleazar. Viele reiche Leute geben ihre goldgestickten Kleider dazu her, um sie als Docht für die große Lampe zu verwenden, so sehr ehrt man das Andenken des Rabbi Simon. — Beim Empfang des Segensspruches, den der bei dieser Festlichkeit vorstehende Rabbi ertheilt, beeilt sich jeder der Anwesenden, ein gewöhnlich nicht unbeträchtliches Opfer darzubringen, welches für die portugiesische Gemeinde Zephath bestimmt ist und hauptsächlich dazu dient, die Gebäude im gehörigen Zustande zu erhalten.

Ich kann die Sage, weshalb die oben mitgetheilten Ceremonien, die man Hillula die Rabbi Simon (Hochzeitsfest des Rabbi Simon) [1] nennt, stattfindet, nicht mittheilen, wie ich mich denn auch bei der Beschreibung dieses in Asien und Afrika, ja sogar bei den Türken in großem Rufe stehenden Festes nur auf die Erzählung der einfachen Thatsache beschränkt habe, deren einzelne Theile schon den Stoff zu einem ganzen Werke liefern würden, wenn man die verschiedenen, in Bezug darauf sehr reichhaltigen Volkssagen in Betracht ziehen wollte.[2]

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[1] Diese Benennung wird im allgemeinen von allen orientalischen Pilgern wiederholt, welche behaupten, daß bei dem Tode des Rabbi die Himmel gejubelt haben.

[2] In Tunis wird in derselben Nacht unter ähnlichen Gebräuchen ein eben solches Fest gefeiert. Die Synagogen werden illuminirt, die Männer und Frauen sind festlich gekleidet, die ganze Nacht wird der Sohar gelernt und bei Tagesanbruch das Lied Bar Jochai gesungen.

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Capitel 6.

Die Lage der Juden in Palästina.

Tiefes Elend und fortwährende Bedrückung sind die rechten Worte zur Bezeichnung des Zustandes, in welchem die Kinder Israels im Lande ihrer Väter leben. Ich fasse eine kurze und getreue Schilderung ihrer Lage in folgende Punkte zusammen.

1) Entbehren sie gänzlich jedes legalen Schutzes und jeder Sicherheit. An die Stelle der in diesen Ländern unbekannten Gesetzeswohlthat treten hier die Befehle der Scheiks und Paschas, deren Charakter und Gesinnungen meist von vornherein sehr wenig Vertrauen einflößen. Die europäischen Consuln allein sind es, die sich oftmals der Bedrückten annehmen und ihnen Schutz gewähren.

2) Werden mit unerhörter Raubgier Steuern über Steuern von ihnen gefordert. Mit Ausnahme von Jerusalem ist überall das Quantum der Steuer ein willkürlich gefordertes, und ganze Gemeinden sind durch die unerschwinglichen Forderungen der Scheiks verarmt, da diese unter dem unbedeutendsten Vorwande ohne alle Controle die Juden mit neuen Lasten bedrücken; es ist unmöglich, alle diese Bedrückungen auch nur aufzuzählen.

3) Sind sie im eigentlichen Sinne des Worts nicht einmal Herren ihres Eigenthums, sie dürfen es sogar nicht wagen, sich zu beklagen, wenn sie beraubt und bestohlen werden, denn die Rache der Araber folgt auf jede Klage.

4) Wird ebensowenig wie ihr Eigenthum ihr Leben geachtet, welches der Laune eines Jeden preisgegeben ist; denn schon der geringste Vorwand, eine ganz harmlose Discussion, ein gesprächsweise entschlüpftes Wort sind genügend, um blutige Repressalien hervorzurufen. Thatsächlichkeiten aller Art erneuern sich fast täglich. Als zum Beispiel in den Kämpfen Mehemed Ali's mit der hohen Pforte die Stadt Hebron von egyptischen Truppen belagert und mit Sturm genommen wurde, erschlug und plünderte man die

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Juden, ja man ließ den Ueberlebenden kaum einige Lumpen, um ihre Blöße zu bedecken. Keine Feder vermag es, die Verzweiflung dieser Unglücklichen zu beschreiben. Die Frauen wurden mit wahrhaft viehischer Rohheit mißhandelt, und noch heute findet man viele, die seit jener Zeit als Krüppel umhergehen. Mit Recht kann man hier die Klagelieder Jeremiä anwenden.[1] Seit jenem großen Unglück bis zum heutigen Tage schmachten die Juden von Hebron im tiefsten Elende und der jetzige Scheik wendet allen Fleiß darauf, nicht ihre Lage zu verbessern, sondern wo möglich zu verschlimmern.

5) Das Hauptzeichen ihres elenden Zustandes ist die allgemeine Armuth, die wir in Palästina bemerkt haben, und die wahrhaft charakteristisch ist, weil wir sie nirgend auf unsern langen Reisen in Europa, Asien und Afrika unter den Juden gefunden haben. Sie reibt die Juden Palästinas wie in früherer Zeit der Aussatz auf. Der Erwerbsquelle des Ackerbaues und des Handels beraubt, leben sie nur von der Mildthätigkeit ihrer Glaubensbrüder im Auslande. — Der Verfasser, der all' dies Elend mit eigenen Augen gesehen, mit seiner Hand die tiefen und stets offenen Wunden berührt, an denen seine Brüder verbluten, hat oft im Herzen die Worte Jeremia's wiederholt: „Wenn ich aufs Feld gehe, so finde ich Menschen mit dem Schwerte getödtet, und komme ich zur Stadt hinein, so finde ich sie am Hungertode verblichen.“[2] — „Wie ist mein Herz vom Schmerze durchwühlt, wie stark schlägt es, daß ich nirgend Ruhe finde.“ — Aber bei all' diesem Elende, das er beweint, hat er auch die Ergebung bewundert, mit der seine Glaubensbrüder seit Jahrhunderten und noch heute ihr Unglück dulden, und die Zuversicht, mit der sie ausharren und hoffen. Wie Schatten schleichen sie über dieses Land dahin, das ihre herrschsüchtigen, grausamen Tyrannen ernährt. Der unwissende und barbarische Araber tritt diesen geheiligten Boden mit Füßen, und betrachtet den Juden wie ein enterbtes, verfluchtes Wesen, das nicht werth ist, ihn zu bewohnen; und doch sind diese Ruinen, diese verheerten Städte, diese verödet

[1] Klagel. Jeremiä Cap. 5, V. 11.
[2] Jeremias Cap. 14, V. 18.

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und unbebaut liegenden weiten Aecker das Erbe Israels, und doch bringt dieses fruchtbare Land noch heute alle Arten Getreides, die Früchte aller Zonen und schmackhafte Weine hervor. Und seine Luft ist von erquickender Reinheit und Frische.

„Wer wird sich deiner erbarmen, o Jerusalem, wer dich beklagen, wer dein Schicksal zu Herzen nehmen.[1] — Mein Herz leidet, daß mein Volk sich in so großes Unglück stürzt, es betrübt und schmerzt mich.[2] — Beten wir, unsere Seele zum Herrn erhebend: Du, der Trost Israels, Du stützest sie in ihren Qualen; warum erscheinest Du wie ein Gast in diesem Lande, wie ein Fremdling, der nur eine Nacht hier verweilet? — Weshalb ahmst du einem Helden nach, der keinen Muth besitzet, einem Riesen, der keine Hülfe bringen kann? — Du indeß bist unter uns, o Herr, Du hast uns Deine Erwählten genannt, o laß nicht ab von uns.[3] — Heile mich, o Herr, und ich werde genesen; stehe Du mir bei, und mir wird geholfen sein; denn Du bist meine Herrlichkeit.“[4]

Mit einem Worte: die Lage der Juden in Palästina, sowol in geistiger wie in materieller Hinsicht, ist eine unerträgliche, und doch sind dort die fruchtbarsten Strecken Landes vorhanden. Wenn der Grundbesitz nicht ausschließlich den Arabern in die Hand gegegeben wäre, wenn man auch für die Juden nur einiges Landeigenthum erwerben und ihnen die Mittel zur Cultur des Bodens geben könnte, so würden sich ihnen genügende Erwerbsquellen darbieten. Was nützt es ihnen aber, den Boden zu bebauen, wenn die Araber ihnen die Ernte wegnehmen?

Beim Anblick all' des Elends, in welchem ein Land schmachtet, das so viel Anrecht auf allgemeine Theilnahme hat, wage ich es, einen Hülferuf an meine Glaubensbrüder in Europa zu richten; sie werden mich erhören, ihre Herzen werden gerührt werden und sie werden voll edlen Mitgefühls ihre Hand nach den Unglücklichen ausstrecken, für welche ich flehe. „Der angeschmiedete

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[1] Jeremias Cap. 15, V. 5.
[2] Jeremias Cap. 8, V. 21.
[3] Jeremias Cap. 14, V. 8 u. 9.
[4] Jeremias Cap. 17, V. 14.

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Gefangene," sagt der Talmud, „kann sich nicht selbst befreien," und er setzt hinzu: „Wer guter Gesinnung ist, wird von Gott die Mittel erhalten, um sie auszuführen."

Ein edler Mann, dessen Name mit Dank und Verehrung von unsern Glaubensgenossen genannt wird, hat sich persönlich nach Palästina in die Mitte unserer Brüder begeben. Es ist Herr Moses Montefiore in London.

Die wohlthätigen Stiftungen, die derselbe in Jerusalem selbst gegründet, sind die fortwährenden Zeugnisse seines großen und edlen Strebens, das Elend seiner Glaubensgenossen zu erleichtern, und Dank diesem frommen und ausgezeichneten Manne, so wie seiner unerschöpflich wohlthätigen Gattin, kann der Zustand der Juden in Jerusalem etwas erträglicher werden.

Das alte, so wenig wirksame System einer jährlichen Hülfsleistung mußte aufgegeben werden, da eine bloße Verbesserung der materiellen Zustände ohne Hebung des moralischen Werthes keinen glücklichen und dauernden Erfolg haben konnte. Um die jüdische Bevölkerung in Palästina aus ihrer Erniedrigung zu erheben, wie dies mit vielem Eifer und Umsicht begonnen wurde, war es neben der Sicherstellung ihrer materiellen Existenz durch Wohlthätigkeitsanstalten vor allem nöthig, durch Unterricht und durch Thätigkeit der eigenen Hände das Gefühl der persönlichen Würde in ihnen zu erwecken.

Und wirklich ist auch eine Unterstützung niemals zweckmäßiger und edelmüthiger angewandt. Selbst Fremde bewundern diese Aufopferung; Mund und Herzen sind voll von Lob und Dankbarkeit.

Der Ewige, Allsehende beschütze und heilige ihre Werke, und alle Kinder Israel werden nicht aufhören sie zu segnen.

„Der Herr hat seine hohe Macht vor allen Völkern bewährt, auf daß alle Nationen die Herrlichkeit unseres Gottes sehen."

„Ich flehe den Herrn an, den allerhöchsten, daß er meine Qualen ende. Er sende mir von oben seine Hülfe und seinen

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Beistand gegen meine Unterdrücker; — Gott hat mich seine Güte und hohe Gnade sehen lassen." [1]

Reise durch das Libanon-Gebirge.

Im Januar 1848 verließ ich das heilige Land Palästina, um über den Libanon nach Damascus zu gehen. Ich trat meine Reise in folgender Route an. Einige Stunden von Zephath fließt der Jordan, welcher hier sehr schmal ist; es führt eine Brücke über ihn, die von den Arabern Djesser Jacob (Jacobsbrücke) genannt wird. Auf dem gegenüberliegenden Jordanufer, nahe an der Brücke, ist ein arabischer Funduk (Gasthaus) errichtet, woselbst ich übernachtete. Von hier aus zog ich in Begleitung zweier Araber über die Ebene Medan nach Novaran oder Nuaran und wir erreichten gegen Abend einen Berg, der von den Arabern Djebel (Berg) Heisch genannt wird, von welchem ich später sprechen werde. Westlich diesem Berge gegenüber liegt ein anderer hoher Berg, der Djebel Makmel, welcher fast das ganze Jahr hindurch mit Schnee bedeckt ist. Zwischen den beiden genannten Bergen liegt ein breites, tiefes Thal, das die Araber Al Bika nennen. In diesem Thale, östlich von dem Berge Makmel, findet man die Ruinen von Belbek, unter dessen Trümmern sich Steine von einer Länge von 8—10 Ellen befinden, welche von einem Gebäude herrühren, das der Tradition nach ein prachtvoller Palast des Königs Salomo gewesen ist. Die Traditionen der Araber behaupten, König Salomo habe diesen Palast für die Königin von Saba, Balkis, errichtet.

Belbek ist eines der merkwürdigsten Bauwerke des Königs Salomo. Es wird in der Bibel mit dem Namen Beth Halwanon (Haus des Libanon) bezeichnet. Im 1. Buche der Könige Cap. 7, V. 2, wird die merkwürdige Bauart des Palastes geschildert, den wir auch in demselben Buche Cap. 9, V. 19, und im 2. Buche der Chronika Cap. 8, V. 6, erwähnt finden.

In dem Berichte des Rabbi Joseph Schwarz aus Jerusalem,

[1] Jesaias Cap. 52, V. 10.

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in seinem hebräischen Werke Tewuat Haarez (Jerusalem 1845) Th. 2, Fol. 33, S. 2, wird erzählt, wann und durch wen dieses merkwürdige Gebäude zerstört worden ist. Es heißt darin wie folgt: „Im Jahre 5162 nach biblischer Zeitrechnung kam Timerlan, ein König des Morgenlandes, dessen Residenz in Samarkand in Mongolien war, und eroberte ganz Persien und Mittelasien; in demselben Jahre unterjochte er auch Anatolien, Syrien und Palästina, Verwüstung und Zerstörung überall verbreitend, wohin er kam. Auch dieses alterthümliche und merkwürdige Gebäude im Libanon erlag seiner Zerstörungswuth."

Dieser Angabe zufolge hat nach meiner Berechnung das Haus zu Belbek ein Alter von etwa 2200 Jahren erreicht, wie ich hier geschichtlich ausführe:

Der Rechnung des Seder Olam nach trat Salomo seine Regierung nach bibl. Zeitr. an im Jahre	2926
Den Tempelbau begann er im 4. Jahre seiner Regierung (1. Könige 6, 1; 2. Chron. 3, 2), also im Jahre	2930
Der Tempelbau dauerte 7 Jahre (1. Kön. 6, 38), also bis zum Jahre	2937
Später baute er einen Palast für sich (1. Kön. 7, 1), womit 13 Jahre, also bis zum Jahre . . . zugebracht wurden.	2950
Salomo regierte 40 Jahre (1. Kön. 11, 42; 2. Chronika 9, 30), 24 Jahre davon verflossen mit den obigen Bauten, wonach noch ein Zeitraum von 16 Jahren bis zu seinem Tode übrig bleibt. In diesen 16 Jahren baute er das Haus im Libanon, Tadmur und andere Ortschaften. (1. Kön. 7, 2; 9, 17—20; 2. Chron. 8, 1—7.) Rechnet man diese 16 Jahre zu der obigen Jahreszahl 2950, so ergiebt sich das Todesjahr Salomo's	2966
Das Haus zu Belbek wurde zerstört	5162
es hat also ein Alter von	2196
oder etwa 2200 Jahren erreicht.	

Von Belbek in der Richtung nach Damaskus trifft man eine

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Quelle, welche Fiji (arabisch Fitschi) genannt wird, deren Wasser, mit mehreren andern Quellen vereinigt, später einen Fluß bilden, welcher südöstlich an Damascus vorbei bis in die Nähe des Meeres dahinzieht, wo er in den Fluß Bardi fließt, mit welchem vereinigt er sich dann in den See Bahret-el-Merdsch ergießt.

Nördlich vom Berge Makmel bei dem Orte Danijeh befindet sich ein Wald von mehreren hundert Cedernbäumen, von denen einige eine Höhe von etwa 40 Ellen und unten am Stamme einen Umfang von 18—20 Ellen erreicht haben.

Der zuerst genannte Berg Djebel Heisch ruht mit seinem Fuß auf dem Antilibanon-Gebirge, dessen unangebaute Nordseite sich bis in die Wüste erstreckt, während seine südliche cultivirte und bewohnte Seite sich bis zum Orte Banijas,[1] seine Ostseite bis nahe an Damascus sich hinzieht. Neben dem Djebel Heisch erhebt sich auf dem Antilibanon noch ein zweiter Berg, der Djebel Assaik, von den Arabern Djebel Tels (Schneeberg) genannt. Die angeführten Berge sind die höchsten Spitzen des Libanon.

An diesen Bergen auf dem Wege nach Damascus liegt das Dorf Beth-al-Desana, bei welchem etwa eine Stunde nördlich davon die Quelle des Flusses Al-Bardi (Bardi heißt kalt) entspringt, der in nordöstlicher Richtung bis nach Damascus fließt, wo er sich in zwei Theile trennt, deren einer durch die Stadt Damascus, der andere neben derselben vorbeiströmt, und später mit dem Fitschi vereint in den See Bahret-el-Merdsch sich ergießt.

Das Libanon-Gebirge ist größtentheils sehr fruchtbar. Es erzeugt vorzügliches Getreide, so wie vielen und guten Wein; die Viehzucht, besonders aber die Schafzucht des Landes ist bedeutend. Von Producten wird namentlich die Baumwollen- und Seidenzucht betrieben, woraus die Landesbewohner einen Stoff verfertigen, den man Kithye nennt.

Den überwiegenden Theil der Bevölkerung bilden die Drusen-Stämme, deren Religion eine Mischung von Christenthum und Mahomedanismus ist, in welcher namentlich, wie mir erzählt

[1] Auf einem Berge, eine Stunde nördlich von Banijas, zeigt man noch heute ein altes Gebäude, das von den Arabern Messet el Tair genannt wird, wo nach der dortigen Sage Gott seinen Bund mit Abraham geschlossen hat.

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wurde, der gegen alle menschliche Sitte verstoßende Gebrauch geduldet wird, daß der Vater die Tochter, der Bruder die Schwester zum Weibe nimmt. Eine andere eigenthümliche Unsitte, welche unter den Drusen herrscht und von welcher man mir erzählte, ist folgende. An einem bestimmten Tage dreimal in jedem Jahre versammeln sich Männer und Weiber; nach gemeinschaftlich gefeiertem Gastmahl fallen dann auf ein gegebenes Zeichen die Männer über die Frauen her und fröhnen ihren fleischlichen Begierden, ohne irgend welche Rücksicht auf Blutsbande, Stand oder Rang zu nehmen.[1] — Ebenso soll dort der Gebrauch herrschen, daß die Männer den sie besuchenden Gästen ihre Weiber und Töchter anbieten. Der Grund dieser Unsittlichkeiten soll in dem Wunsche liegen, einen Riesen wie den Goliath zu erzeugen, welchen sie aus der Sage kennen und von dem sie behaupten, er sei durch eine zufällige Umarmung erzeugt worden.[2]

Als ein besonderer Beweis dafür, in welchem Maße die zuerst erwähnte Unsitte gebräuchlich ist, kann ich folgende Thatsache mittheilen. Ein Israelit war mit einem drusischen Familienhaupte sehr befreundet, und wurde eines Tages von dem Sohne seines Freundes gebeten, für ihn bei dem Vater seine leibliche Schwester zum Weibe zu erbitten. Der Israelit erklärte sich dazu bereit, und trug dann seinem drusischen Freunde die Bitte des Sohnes vor. Dieser aber erklärte, daß er den Wunsch seines Sohnes nicht erfüllen könne, da er entschlossen sei, seine Tochter selbst zu heirathen. Mir wurde dieses Factum von jenem Israeliten selbst mitgetheilt.

Die Gebirgsbewohner bilden eine Art Republik. Zwei Scheiks,

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[1] Benjamin de Tudela S. 29 spricht ebenfalls von dieser Unsitte. Dr. H. Petermann, mit dem ich über diese Unsitte sprach, hielt die Angabe für unrichtig, da er von einem zum Christenthum bekehrten Drusen eine schriftliche Aufstellung aller ihrer Sitten und Religionsgebräuche erhielt, worin der erwähnte Fall nicht vorkommt. Ich hatte jedoch dagegen den Einwand, daß, da die Drusen in mehrere Secten zerfallen, die Sitte vielleicht bei einer andern Secte sich finde, als die, zu welcher der bekehrte Druse gehörte. — Rabbi Joseph Schwarz spricht in seinem oben angeführten Werke, S. 38, ebenfalls von den Unsitten der Drusen.

[2] Talmud Messechet Sota Cap. 8, Seite 42. Erklärung dazu von Rabbi Johannan.

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von welchen jeder einem besonderen Bezirk vorsteht, regieren das Land. Der eine, mit Namen Amir Abschir, wohnt in der Stadt Dir-al-Kamir, nordöstlich von Tyrus, der andere, Namens Hamir, wohnt in der Nähe von Aldania. Die Drusen sind ein großer und starker Menschenschlag, dabei unerschrockene und tapfere Krieger.

In einigen Orten findet man vereinzelte Judenfamilien, welche bei den Drusen sehr beliebt sind und sich wie die Eingeborenen mit Ackerbau ꝛc. beschäftigen. Die oben erwähnten sittenlosen Gebräuche herrschen bei ihnen nicht, sie sind ganz religiös, aber unwissend. Ihre Kinder, namentlich die Mädchen, ziehen nach altpatriarchalischem Gebrauche mit ihren Heerden aus, wie die Bibel (1. B. Moses Cap. 29, V. 9.) von Rachel erzählt. Man erzählte mir eine Geschichte, die vor einigen Jahren vorgefallen ist, daß ein solches junges Mädchen, welches mit seiner Heerde im Gebirge umherzog, von einem Drusen überfallen wurde, der es bezwingen wollte. Das Mädchen mahnte ihn, von ihr abzulassen und drohte Gewalt mit Gewalt zu vertreiben. Der Druse beachtete weder Bitten noch Drohungen und drang auf das Mädchen ein, welches dann ein Pistol hervorzog und ihn niederschoß. Als die Sache später vor die Obrigkeit kam, erhielt das Mädchen nicht nur keine Strafe, sondern ein besonderes Lob für seine Kühnheit.[1]

Im Bezirk des Scheik Hamir wohnen auch eine große Anzahl Christen, die sogenannten Maroniten, deren Patriarch in der Stadt Kaniban wohnt, woselbst sich auch ihre Kirche befindet. Zuweilen entstehen zwischen ihnen und den Drusenstämmen blutige Fehden, bei deren einer vor längerer Zeit viele Christen umkamen.

Vom Libanon aus zog ich nach Kanneitra, Safa, Kokab, Daraya, und kam dann am vierzehnten Tage nach Damascus.

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[1] Auch Rabbi Joseph Schwarz erzählt in seinem oben angeführten Werke S. 39. diese Thatsache.

Capitel 7.

Damascus (arabisch Schamm).

Synagoge von Djubar. — Medrasch Gechsi, das frühere Asyl der Aussätzigen. — Moschee Moaviah. — Das Grab Naeman's. — Latkie. — Antakijeh. — Aleppo. — Die Grotte Esra's. — Alterthümliche Synagoge. — Tedif. — Aintab. — Merasch. — Ein Vorfall. — Birdschak, Stadt des Nimrod. — Urfa, alterthümliche Monumente. — Suwerek. — Tschermuk.

Die Stadt Damascus war, wie die Bibel berichtet, lange Zeit die Residenz der Könige von Syrien. Es wohnen dort gegen 500—600 jüdische Familien (Rajahs). Außer diesen ansäßigen Juden wohnt noch eine namhafte Anzahl unter dem Schutze ihrer resp. Consulate stehender Glaubensgenossen in der Stadt, so daß sich die Gesammtzahl auf ca. 4000 und darüber belaufen wird.[1] Sie besitzen mehre Synagogen, in deren einer man die 5 Bücher Moses in einem Bande auf Pergament geschrieben bewahrt, der die Jahreszahl 4749 (989 n. Chr.) trägt. Ein anderes Manuscript, das sämmtliche Propheten enthält, datirt vom Jahre 4344 (581 n. Chr.); es ist auf den Anfangsseiten mit colorirten Bildern verziert, die den Tempel mit dem Altar des Allerheiligsten, mehre heilige Gefäße und eine Zeichnung der früheren Ringmauern Jerusalems darstellen, welche letztere, obgleich etwas verwischt, doch sehr correct ist und die Spuren einer geschickten Künstlerhand zeigt. Die Buchstaben des Manuscripts sind hebräisch Quadrat und von ganz gewöhnlicher Form.

Eine halbe Meile östlich von der Stadt, wenn man aus dem Thore Bab Duma geht, liegt das Dörfchen Djubar[2]) oder

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[1] Pethachia S. 193 führt bei Damascus 10,000 Juden an.

[2] Ritter, Erdkunde, Th. 17, 2. Abth., S. 1312: Das Dorf Dschobar, im NO. von Damascus, ist den Juden besonders heilig, weil es von ihnen für das Hobar (oder Hoba, 1. B. Mos. 1, 15) gehalten wird, bis wohin Abraham dem Heere der vier syrischen Könige mit seinen Knechten nachjagte, „und schlug sie bis gen Hoba, da zur Linken die Stadt Damascus lieget, und befreiete Lot und seine Habe aus den Händen der Feinde.“ Doch giebt

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Djubaris, in welchem einige Juden wohnen, und wo sich eine sehr alterthümliche Synagoge[1] befindet. Die Volkssage erzählt, der Erbauer derselben sei der Prophet Elisa, und durch Titus sei sie zerstört worden, durch Rabbi Eleazar, Sohn Arach's, sei sie wiederhergestellt, wie von einer Synagoge in Djubar im Talmud[2] erwähnt wird, und im 16. Jahrhundert ist sie durch einen zu einem anderen Glauben übergetretenen Juden ruinirt worden.[3]

Die Bauart dieses alterthümlichen Gebäudes erinnert an die Moschee Moaviah;[4] das Innere war von 13 Marmorsäulen, 6 auf der rechten und 7 auf der linken Seite, getragen und ganz mit Marmor ausgelegt; man trat durch ein einziges Portal in dasselbe ein. Unter dem heiligen Schrein, wo der Pentateuch aufbewahrt wurde, befand sich eine Grotte, worin mehre Personen aufrecht stehen konnten, und zu der man auf einer Treppe von etwa 20 Stufen hinabstieg. Wie die Juden sagen, soll in dieser Grotte der Prophet Elias einen Zufluchtsort vor den Nachstellungen des Königs Ahab gefunden haben. Jetzt ist außer der doch nicht ähnlichen Grotte von all dem Erwähnten nichts mehr zu sehen. — Am

eine andere etymologisirende Erklärung der älteren Araber den kaum eine Stunde etwa nördlicher liegenden Ort Berzeh (von baraza, vorrücken) statt Hoba am Fuße des Kasiun-Berges an, bis zu welchem Abraham mit seinen Knechten siegreich vordrang, und dann auf dem Berge seine Andacht verrichtete, der ihm deshalb geweiht ist, wobei denn auch seines Hausvogtes Elieser von Damasco in der Legende rühmlich erwähnt wird.

[1] Ritter, Erdkunde, Th. 17, 2. Abth. S. 1424: Zu Dschobar ist, nach v. Kremer, eine jüdische Synagoge in hohen Ehren, in welcher eine alte Gesetzesrolle auf Pergament geschrieben aufbewahrt wird; auch zeigt man in ihr in einer alten ausgemauerten Steingruft das Grab des Propheten Elias, darin Kranke in Einer Nacht genesen sollen. Jeden Freitag versammeln sich hier die in Damascus wohnenden Juden und lesen gemeinschaftlich im alten Testamente.

[2] Messechet Berachot Fol. 50. — Seder Hadoroth Fol. 77.

[3] Teschuwath Mabit Th. 3, Fol. 147, S. 2.

[4] Benjamin de Tudela führt diese Synagoge nicht an. — Pethachia (S. 198) spricht von 2 Synagogen, deren eine durch Elisa, die andere durch Rabbi Eleazer, Sohn Asaria's, errichtet sei. Er verlegt sie jedoch nach Damascus: In Damasco Synagoga extat, quam condidit Elisaeus, itemque alia magna, cujus fundator R. Elieser Asariae filius, in qua precantur. — Ich glaube jedoch, daß meine Angabe richtig, und beide Synagogen nur eine sind, wie oben ausgeführt.

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Eingange der Synagoge, gegen die Mitte in der Mauer zur Rechten, befindet sich ein unregelmäßig geformter Stein, an welchem man die Spuren einiger Stufen bemerkt; auf diesem Steine soll, wie die Tradition berichtet, der König Hasael gesessen haben, als der Prophet Elisa ihn zum Könige salbte. Die Juden erzählen Wunderdinge von dieser Synagoge. Sie wurde von allen Eroberern respectirt, ja selbst die Araber, die doch sonst das ganze Land verwüsteten, haben dies Gebäude, das von einer merkwürdigen Solidität ist, nicht angetastet und die Juden, die dort eine Zuflucht suchten, waren niemals Angriffen ausgesetzt.

Wenn man durch das Thor Bab el Schérky hinausgeht, eine Stunde östlich von der Stadt, trifft man ein altes Gebäude Medrasch Gechsi, nach einem Diener Elisa's genannt[1], der von dem Propheten verflucht, von einem weißen Aussatz ergriffen wurde, welcher ihn bis an sein Ende quälte. Noch in heutiger Zeit sucht man die von dieser unheilbaren Krankheit angesteckten Menschen auf, um sie der Sicherheit wegen in einigen Häusern, die in einem Garten bei diesem Grabe liegen, zusammen aufzuheben. Die Sage legt diesem Orte die Heilung des Uebels seit dem grauesten Alterthum bei. Eine klare Wasserquelle rieselt an der einen Seite dieser Jahrhunderte alten Anstalt, die lediglich von den Geschenken und Almosen frommer Mahomedaner erhalten wird.

In der Stadt liegt ein sehr geräumiger Platz, der von einer hohen und starken Mauer umschlossen ist; in der Mitte desselben befindet sich ein alterthümliches Bauwerk, es wird von den Mahomedanern Moaviah[2], von den Juden „Bethrimon"[3] genannt, und heute als Moschee gebraucht.[4] Eine Marmorcolonnade zieht sich durch das weitläufige viereckige Gebäude; Mauern, Säulen, Boden, Decke, Alles ist Marmor; durch eine weite Oeffnung in der Decke dringt Licht und Luft herein. Durch vier große Por-

[1] 2. Buch der Könige Cap. 5, V. 20 u. 27.

[2] Man sehe die Geschichte dieser Moschee in Dr. Carl Ritter's Erdkunde 4. Buch, Theil 17, Abth. 2, S. 1363—1375.

[3] 2. Buch der Könige Cap. 5, V. 18.

[4] Benjamin de Tudela S. 47 spricht auch von dieser Moschee, er nennt sie Guma Dameffek.

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tale tritt man in das Innere des Gebäudes. Dort beginnen die Mahomedaner ihre Wallfahrt zum Grabe ihres Propheten in Mekka. Mit Allem was zur Reise nöthig ist versehen, ziehen die Karawanen mit ihren Kameelen zu einem Thore hinein und zum entgegengesetzten hinaus, sofort von da ihre fromme Fahrt fortsetzend. Im Innern dieser Moschee befindet sich das Grab Jichia ben Sachor's, der als Heiliger von den Mahomedanern verehrt wird.

Im Osten der Stadt, außerhalb des Thores Bab-el-Schérky, in einer Entfernung von etwa einer halben Stunde, findet man ein Grab von colossaler Größe, an welchem jedoch sonst keine auffällige Merkmale zu sehen sind. Die Tradition der Juden des Landes berichtet, es sei das Grab Naeman's, des obersten Feldherrn der tapferen Armee des Königs von Aram. Die Araber nennen dieses Grab Scheik-Atzlan und verehren es als Heiligthum. Wenige Schritte davon fließt ein starker Bach, der dem Berge Riboui-Bill-Min-Sar entquillt, die Juden nennen ihn den Berg Hermon, von dem schon König David spricht.[1] Der Name des Baches ist „Zouf" (Wolle), weil man in seinen Wassern die Wolle zu reinigen pflegt. Derselben Quelle entspringen vier Ströme, welche Damascus ihr Wasser zusenden, und von da aus in verschiedene kleinere Flüsse sich theilen. Der eine von ihnen heißt Annivad, der zweite Thora, der dritte Jazid und der vierte Bardi, die nach der Behauptung der Juden dieselben sind, von denen 2. B. der Kön. Cap. 5, V. 12 erzählt wird.

Von Damascus reiste ich durch das Libanon-Gebirge den Bardifluß hinauf, über Deir Kanon, Zuk, Ez Zebedoni und Andjar nach Beirut, wo ich mich einschiffte und über Tripoli di Suri (von den Arabern Trabolus al Scham genannt), nach Latkie fuhr. Die letzte Reise war des widrigen Windes halber eine sehr schwierige, und das Schiff, auf dem ich mich befand, mehre Male in Gefahr Schiffbruch zu leiden. Nach einer elftägigen stürmischen Fahrt landete ich in Latkie, nahm dort ein Pferd und ritt in Begleitung zweier Araber, von denen der eine als Wache diente, der andere Besitzer des Pferdes war, nach dem

[1] Psalm 133, V. 3.

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Antakijeh des Talmud. Unterwegs kamen wir an ein Zelt, aus welchem ein Araber hervortrat, der mir, weil ich ein Jude sei, eine Abgabe von zwei Piastern abforderte, ob im Namen seiner Regierung oder in seinem eigenen Interesse, weiß ich nicht zu bestimmen. Ich weigerte mich jedoch zu zahlen und ritt ungestört weiter. In Antakijeh selbst fand ich 150 jüdische Familien, die ziemlich zufrieden mit ihrer Lage, sehr religiös, nicht unwissend, jedoch außerordentlich abergläubisch sind.

Aleppo.[1]

Eine Strecke von 12 Tagereisen trennt Damascus und Aleppo, deren Verbindung durch die vielen arabischen Straßenräuber eine sehr gefährdete ist.

[1] Kayserling, P. Teixeira: Ehe wir Teixeira nach Aleppo, seinem nächsten Reiseziel begleiten, machen wir mit ihm in Ana am Euphrat Halt.* — Nach der Tradition der Einwohner ist diese Stadt sehr alt und unter dem Namen Hena in der Bibel verzeichnet.** Die beschwerlichste Tour, welche der arme Pedro zurücklegte, war die von Ana nach Aleppo. Sie dauerte von Ende December bis Mitte März und wie dankte er Gott, endlich die Stadt erreicht zu haben. Daß Aleppo oder Haleb, wie es von Mauren und Türken genannt wird, das in der Bibel oft erwähnte Aram Soba ist, wird von älteren und neueren Geographen, wie auch von Teixeira behauptet. Die Stadt, welche nach allgemeiner Annahme heute über 14000 Häuser hat, zählte damals gegen 22000, von denen viele durch Größe und Schönheit sich besonders auszeichneten. „Aber nicht allein die Häuser der Türken und Mauren sind von einer Pracht, wie man sie sich nur denken kann, sondern auch die der Juden, griechischen und katholischen Christen und Armenier sind so schön, daß Fürsten darin wohnen können.*** Wir reden hier nicht von den dreihundert dort befindlichen Moscheen und ihren prächtigen inneren Einrichtungen; nicht von den vielen Kaufhäusern mit den Waaren aus allen Weltgegenden, nicht von den breiten, mit Marmorplatten gepflasterten Straßen dieser Stadt, auch nicht von dem königlichen

* Siehe Ihewuah Haarez von Rabbi Joseph Schwarz Fol. 143.

** 2. Könige 18, 34; 19, 13 und die Parallelstelle Jesaias 37, 13. — P. Teixeira, 139.

*** Ibid. 175: y no solo las de los Turcos y Moros son de aquella suerte, pero aun de las de los Judios y Christianos Griegos y Armenios son muchas de tanto precio que son capazes de habitar en ellas Principes.

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Aleppo wird von den Juden mit zwei Namen genannt, nämlich Zova und Aramzova,[1] von denen der erstere noch heute in allen jüdischen Schriften gebraucht wird. Es war die Hauptstadt eines Königreiches, dessen Beherrscher zur Zeit David's Hadarezer, Sohn Rechob's war.[2]

Die jüdische Einwohnerschaft der Stadt besteht aus etwa 1500 bis 2000 Familien,[3] die unter dem Schutze der europäischen Consuln, deren einige ihre Glaubensgenossen sind, sich großer Freiheiten erfreuen; denn die Herren Raphael di Piechotti, Consul von Rußland und Preußen, und Elias Piechotti, General-Consul

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Hospital, über dessen Verwaltung unser Reisender Klage führt, wohl aber von dem Hügel, der sich in der Mitte der Stadt erhebt und wie ein Palladium von allen Seiten von ihr getrennt ist. Er ist rund wie ein kleiner Berg und auf ihm befindet sich eine Festung en miniature, welche, wie Juden und Mauern versichern, Joab, den Feldherrn David's zum Gründer haben soll. Nach der Tradition ist nicht allein die dortige Synagoge von demselben Joab erbaut, sondern — die Phantasie gewinnt hier an Spielraum! — der Patriarch Abraham soll sogar schon auf dem Festungsberge eine Zeitlang seine Residenz aufgeschlagen haben.* Mauren und Türken, Christen und Armenier, Chaldäer und Griechen wohnen in dieser reichen Handelsstadt; über 1000 jüdische Familien lebten zur Zeit, als Teixeira die Stadt besuchte, in einem getrennten, mit Mauern umschlossenen Stadttheile. Sie haben, so erzählt Pedro, eine große Synagoge, welche ihrer Behauptung gemäß vor 1500 Jahren erbaut wurde. Die meisten der dortigen Juden sind reich und handeltreibend; andere verdienen ihr täglich Brod als Läufer, einige ernähren sich auch als Künstler, Goldarbeiter und dergleichen.**

1 2. Buch Samuelis Cap. 8, V. 3 u. 5.

2 Psalm 60, V. 2. — 1. Chronica Cap. 18, V. 3 u. 6.

3 Benjamin de Tudela S. 49 erzählt, daß in Aleppo 1500 Israeliten wohnen.

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* Teixeira, 176: En medio de la ciudad esta un collado alto, separado ygualmente por todas las partes de todo el resto de la cindad, redondo como un monte de trigo, sobre el qual esta una fortaleza que Moros y Judios tienen por tradicion que primero la fundo Joab capitan General de David: tambien affirman que en aquel mismo lugar residio el Patriarcha Abraham algun tiempo.

** Ibid. 178: Tambien viven Judios de los quales haura mil casas buenas en barrio separado peró dentro de los muros, con una grande Synagoga, que affirman hauer mil y quinientos anos que fue fundada y se conserua: hay muchos dellos ricos, los mas son mercaderes, el resto corredores y officiales come plateros, lapidarios, y de otras artes semejantes.

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von Oesterreich, haben sich über den Pascha einen gewissen Einfluß errungen, dessen sie sich oft zu Gunsten ihrer Glaubensbrüder bedienen.

Die Synagoge ist von bedeutendem Alter, und im Innern durch eine dreifache Reihe von 72 Säulen getragen. Eine Grundversenkung veranlaßt es, daß man, um in den Tempel zu gelangen, zwanzig Stufen hinabsteigen muß. Der dortigen Tradition zufolge ist das Gebäude von Joab, dem Feldherrn David's errichtet. Die Fenster, die in einen großen, schönen, der Gemeinde angehörigen Garten führen, laufen in Folge der Grundversenkung mit diesem parallel. Ein Zimmer in der obern Etage ist etwas verfallen, und dient heute den die Synagoge besuchenden Frauen zum Aufenthalt.

Die jüdische Bevölkerung Aleppos zeichnet sich eben so wohl durch ihre treue Hingebung und Anhänglichkeit an das große und heilige Vermächtniß ihrer Väter, das jüdische Gesetz, aus, wie durch große jüdisch-wissenschaftliche Bildung. Nicht weniger als sechszig gelehrte Männer tragen den Namen „Chacham" (der Weise). Der ehrwürdige, greise Oberrabbiner Abraham Antibi, welcher sich durch Herausgabe verschiedener gelehrter Schriften, unter denen ich nur sein Werk „Obel Jescharim" erwähnen will, einen großen Namen erworben, und der zweite Rabbiner, Mardochai Liwaton, der die Güte hatte, mich mehrere Male in meiner Wohnung zu besuchen, stehen ganz besonders als Muster von Gelehrsamkeit und Frömmigkeit da, und verdienen den tüchtigen Rabbinern Polens zur Seite gestellt zu werden.

Das Gesetzesstudium wird hier mit der größten Aufopferung gepflegt, und es giebt wohl keinen Juden in Aleppo, welches Alters oder Standes er sei, der nicht trotz aller Anforderungen, die sein Geschäft oder seine Stellung an ihn richtet, Muße findet, täglich zur bestimmten Zeit zu dem ewigen Born der Thora zu pilgern, in dem aus ihm sprudelnden „Wasser des Lebens" Belehrung zu schöpfen und sich zu begeistern für die heilige, hehre Aufgabe seines Glaubens. Zur mitternächtlichen Stunde sieht man den größten Theil der Gemeinde in den Mauern der Synagoge versammelt; Jünglinge im Gefühle ihrer jugendlichen, noch ungeschwächten Kraft, Männer mit den Sorgen für Weib und

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Kind, schon dem Leben hienieden halb entzogene schwache Greise, alle schaaren sie sich um die alte treue Mutter Zion, und während draußen Nacht die Erde umhüllt, erwacht hier zum hellen Lichte der gottdurchdrungene Geist der treuen Söhne Juda's. Bis zum Erscheinen der Morgenröthe bleiben sie beisammen, mit dem Studium des Talmuds und Sohars beschäftigt, oder sich frommen Gebeten hingebend. Das Morgengebet beschließt diese Versammlungen und der Tag findet sie rührig und fleißig in ihren Geschäften. — So Nacht für Nacht. Nur die Nacht vom Freitag auf den Sabbath macht eine Ausnahme, in welcher die Beschäftigung nicht getheilt ist, sondern wo von vier Chorführern geleitet, die ganze Versammlung begeisterte, heilige, von ihren Chachamim verfaßte Lieder singt. Auf einen Europäer macht diese Art des Gesanges durch die Eigenthümlichkeit der Sangweise und der begeisterten Stimmung der Gesangchöre den erhebendsten Eindruck. Die größte Anzahl der Gesänge sind von dem berühmten Dichter Rabbi Israel Nagarah aus Damaskus verfaßt, dessen ausgezeichnetes Werk Semiroth Israel allbekannt ist. Die Chorführer besitzen ein ganz außergewöhnliches Gedächtniß; man hat mir von einem erzählt, der über 1000 Gesänge auswendig konnte. Außerdem besteht noch ein besonderer Gesangverein für den Vortrag der Psalmen, welche dieser mit einer Erhebung und Würde vorträgt, wie ich sie niemals vernommen, so daß sie den Zuhörer mit einer wirklich davidischen Begeisterung erfüllen. In einer andern kleinen Jeschiwa kommen jeden Tag mehrere Chachamim zusammen, die ihr Gebet auf cabalistische Weise verrichten.

Die Sabbath- und Festtage sind zwischen Andachtsübungen und Vergnügungen getheilt. Letztere werden eben so gewissenhaft wie die ersteren begangen. Alle nehmen an denselben Theil; der Unterschied des Reichthums und der Armuth hört hierbei auf. Die Wohlhabenden sorgen mit solcher Liebe für die Armen, daß letzteren auch nicht das Geringste zur Sabbath- und Festfeier fehlt. Ueberhaupt ist die Wohlthätigkeit und Gastfreundschaft der Juden Aleppos wahrhaft groß. Sie sind in der That würdige Söhne Abraham's. Dem europäischen Juden stehen alle Häuser offen; er kann Wochen, ja Monate lang hier zubringen im Hause seines Wirthes, ohne daß auch nur die geringste Unaufmerksamkeit

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Seitens des Wirthes und der Hausgenossen ihn erinnert, daß er nicht Glied des Hauses sei. Ich selbst fand in dem Hause des angesehenen Salomon Lunjado fünf Wochen lang die freundlichste Aufnahme.

Aber nicht nur den Stammes- und Glaubensgenossen, jedem christlichen Reisenden öffnet sich gleichfalls das jüdische Haus.

Die Häuser sind sehr schön und zeichnen sich durch ganz besondere Reinlichkeit aus. Die Speisen werden sehr wohlschmeckend zubereitet und munden selbst dem verwöhnten europäischen Gaumen ganz vortrefflich. Die Juden hier kleiden sich wie die palästinensischen. Sie sprechen arabisch, jedoch reden sehr viele hebräisch mit der sogenannten portugiesischen Aussprache und italienisch recht fertig. — Die Armen der Gemeinde sind zwar zahlreich, werden jedoch vortrefflich unterstützt.

Aleppo ist von hohen Mauern umgeben; sein blühender Handel dehnt seine Verbindungen nach Mussul, Bagdad, Diarbekr, nach Egypten, Ostindien, und bis nach England und Frankreich aus. Im Jahre 1705 verwüstete ein Erdbeben die Stadt und viele Menschen wurden zur Hälfte begraben, so daß sie wie Bäume mit ihren Wurzeln in der Erde zu haften schienen. Ein anderes Erdbeben, das sich über die ganze Provinz erstreckte, richtete im Jahre 1822 große Verheerungen an. Eine dritte Erschütterung im Jahre 1848, welche ich dort selbst erlebte, war weniger stark und hinterließ keine bedeutende Spuren von Zerstörung.

Acht Stunden von Aleppo, auf der Straße nach Aintab, liegt ein Ort, der von den Juden Tedif, von den Arabern nach dem Namen des großen Esra, Capel-Azar genannt wird. In der Synagoge des Ortes zeigt man eine Grotte und sogar einen Stein, wo Esra, der Landestradition zufolge, nach der Rückkehr von Babylon die Thora geschrieben haben soll.[1] Es wohnen nur ungefähr zwanzig jüdische Familien daselbst, welche wie die Juden in allen andern Orten des Landes, die ich besucht habe, arabisch sprechen. Die Bewohner von Aleppo wallfahrten alljährlich vor dem Beginn des Wochenfestes nach Tedif.

Von Tedif kehrte ich nach Aleppo zurück, von wo ich nach

[1] Esra Cap. 7, V. 6 u. 21.

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der arabischen Stadt Killis, nördlich von Aleppo, reiste, deren jüdische Einwohnerschaft gegen fünfzig Familien beträgt, die vom Handel leben und sich in einer glücklichen Lage befinden. Nach kurzer Rast wandte ich mich von dort nach Aintab in südöstlicher Richtung von Killis, wohin ich nach einem Marsch von anderthalb Tagen gelangte. Ehe ich die Stadt betreten durfte, mußte ich mit meinen Reisegefährten eine zehntägige Quarantäne in einem aus zwei großen Gebäuden bestehenden Lazareth aushalten, welches oft so überfüllt ist, daß die Reisenden unter freiem Himmel campiren müssen; diejenigen, welche von der Gesundheitspolizei als am meisten verdächtig betrachtet werden, sind die Kaufleute aus den benachbarten Gebirgen, namentlich aus Daghestan und Grusim.

Drei Tagemärsche von Aintab nimmt das Land einen ganz anderen Charakter an; man tritt in eine Gebirgsregion, deren Gipfel mit ewigem Schnee bedeckt sind, der, wenn er schmilzt, in schmutzigen, schäumenden Strömen tosend herabstürzt. Nördlich von Aintab auf dem Wege nach Meraſch fließt der Marad-Fluß.

Ich gelangte zunächst nach Meraſch, am Fuße des Taurusgebirges gelegen, dessen schimmernde Gletscher ihre Häupter bis in die Wolken hineinstrecken. Das Klima ist fortwährend rauh aber gesund, die Männer sind stark und kräftiger Statur. Die Stadt treibt mit der Umgegend und nach Kurdistan Handelsgeschäfte in landwirthschaftlichen Producten, in Schlachtvieh und Wolle. Die Straßen des Orts sind an beiden Seiten von Kanälen eingefaßt, welche das ganze Jahr hindurch von dem geschmolzenen Schnee bewässert werden. Die Häuser sind schön, die Bewohner, von denen manche reich sind, kleiden sich türkisch. Die jüdische Gemeinde besteht aus etwa 50 Familien, die sich eines ziemlichen Wohlstandes und mancher Freiheiten erfreuen.

Von Meraſch aus durchstreifte ich die Umgegend, die reich an pittoresken Ansichten, die Beachtung des Reisenden verdient, und kam dann nach Aintab zurück. Bei meiner Rückreise dorthin wurde ich beim Durchreiten eines der durch den geschmolzenen Gebirgsschnee gebildeten Ströme von meinem scheu gewordenen Pferde abgeworfen und blieb mit dem einen Fuß im Steigbügel hängen. Rückwärts gefallen wurde ich vom Pferde eine bedeu-

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tende Strecke mit fortgeschleift, bis ich endlich ganz zerschlagen, mit Blut bedeckt und besinnungslos liegen blieb, in welchem Zustande mich eine vorüberziehende Karawane aufhob. Nach einigen Tagen der Ruhe machte ich mich wieder auf den Weg, da ich weder Zeit noch Geld genug hatte, um mich völlig heilen zu lassen.

Ich fuhr zunächst nach dem nur anderthalb Tagereisen entfernten Birdschak, arabisch Bir-Sacca (Birra); es ist, wie die Juden meinen, die Stadt Aram Naharajim, in der die Eltern Rebecca's wohnten.[1] Jetzt wohnen keine Juden mehr in dem Orte, doch kommen dieselben in Geschäften oft dahin.

Die Reisenden, welche in Aintab der Quarantäne entgangen sind, müssen hier diese Fatalität aushalten. Um in die Stadt zu kommen, passirt man auf einer Fähre den Euphrat, der auf dieser Seite die Stadt beschützt, während die anderen Seiten theils durch eine dicht an der Stadt befindliche Gebirgskette, theils durch alte, an das Gebirge sich anschließende Mauern geschützt werden. Aus der Ferne gewährt diese große Mauer, welche die Stadt im Halbkreise umzieht und in ihren Umrissen von dem dunkelblauen Hintergrunde der Granitkette absticht, einen merkwürdigen Anblick. Am Fuße des Gebirges sieht man eine Anzahl alter, theils schon in Ruinen zerfallener Häuser verschiedener Größe, jedoch das eine immer an das andere stoßend. Jedes dieser Häuser enthält einen Keller, in welchem zwei bis drei Zimmer angelegt sind, welche höchstens zwei bis drei Personen fassen können; alle diese Zimmer stehen mit den ungeheuren Souterrains in Verbindung, die sich unter der Stadt, unter dem Euphrat und bis zu einer Ausdehnung von einer Stunde auf dem andern Ufer des Flusses hinziehen. Auf dem Gipfel des Berges ist ein Funduk (Herberge) angelegt, wo armenische Kaufleute wohnen.

Urfa.

Achtzehn Stunden von Birdschak (Birra) liegt in einer wüsten Gegend die Stadt Urfa, ebenfalls von einer Mauer umschlossen. Rings um die Stadt findet man eine große Menge von Menschen-

[1] 1. B. Moses Cap. 24, V. 10.

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hand geschaffener Grotten, die sämmtlich offen sind und in ein Souterrain führen, das, wie man sagt, gegen einige Stunden lang ist. Man trifft in demselben ordentliche Thore, Thüren, Straßen, weitläufige Plätze und sogar Brunnen. Es liegt außer allem Zweifel, daß dies die Spuren einer durch ein Erdbeben verschütteten Stadt sind. Sollte es nicht das alte „Ur“ in Chaldäa sein, von welchem Moses spricht?[1]

Man findet in Urfa Monumente, deren Entstehung zu den ältesten biblischen Zeiten hinaufreicht, einzelne noch bis heute erhalten, andere in Ruinen liegend. Wir erwähnen hier einige der merkwürdigsten:

1) Das Haus, in welchem Abraham geboren wurde. Es ist eine künstliche Grotte aus einem einzigen Stücke Felsen gehauen, mit einer Wiege von weißem Stein. Die Grotte ist geschlossen und wird von den Arabern bewacht, jedoch kann man gegen ein kleines Eintrittsgeld hineintreten. Die Araber pflegen ihre kranken Kinder dorthin zu tragen und in die Wiege Abraham's zu legen, in welcher sie die Kleinen des Nachts hindurch liegen lassen; sind sie am andern Morgen noch nicht todt, so wird ihrer Genesung mit Sicherheit entgegen gesehen.

2) Der Ofen, in welchen nach dem Sefer Hajaschar Nimrod den Patriarchen Abraham werfen ließ; es ist eine von einem Geländer umgebene Grube, um welche man, um dieselbe vor Unwetter zu schützen, ein Haus hat bauen lassen, das sorgsam verschlossen gehalten wird. — Heute fließt daselbst eine Quelle, die sich theilend zwei Teiche bildet, welche sehr reich an Fischen sind. Wie alle Orte und Gegenstände, die in irgend einer Art mit dem großen Patriarchen in Verbindung gebracht werden können, bei der Verehrung, welche die Mahomedaner für den heiligen Mann kundgeben, mit größter Andacht betrachtet werden, so wird auch der Ofen als Stelle seines Märtyrthums, so wie die Quelle, die dort fließt, für heilig gehalten. Sogar die Fische, die in den beiden durch die Quelle gebildeten und genährten Teichen leben, werden mit Verehrung betrachtet, so daß das Fischen in diesen heiligen Gewässern als ein Capitalverbrechen mit Todesstrafe ge-

[1] 1. B. Moses Cap. 15, V. 7.

ahndet wird. Daher kommt es denn, daß die Fiſche dort ſo ſehr gedeihen und an die Nähe der Menſchen ſo gewöhnt ſind, daß ſie bei ihrer Annäherung keineswegs fliehen, ſondern ihre munteren Spiele ruhig fortſetzen.[1]

3) Etwa 50 Schritte von dieſem Ofen ſtehen zwei ſteinerne Säulen, welche vermittelſt einer eiſernen Kette mit einander verbunden ſind. Nach der Ortsſage ſoll das Feuer, in welches Abraham geworfen wurde, ſo ſtark geweſen ſein, daß eine Annäherung an daſſelbe unmöglich und man deshalb genöthigt war, dieſen Apparat aufzuſtellen, um den Märtyrer von ferne in die Gluth zu werfen. Das oben angeführte Buch Hajaſchar theilt alle Details mit, wie der Patriarch gerettet wurde, ſein Bruder Haran aber umkam.

Etwa eine Stunde von der Stadt an den Seiten eines felſigen Berges ſind an mehren Stellen eine große Zahl viereckiger Grotten von bedeutender Höhe angelegt. Eine derſelben, geräumiger als die anderen, führt in eine zweite, welche zuſammen ein Gemach bilden. Das Innere dieſer uralten Wohnungen iſt

[1] Kayſerling, P. Teixeira: Vier Tagereiſen von Aleppo liegt am Abhange zweier Berge das alte Orfa, der Urſitz des Patriarchen, als ſolcher Ur* genannt. Noch heute, ſagt der Reiſende, wird der Ort, an welchem die Chaldäer Abraham verbrennen wollten, allgemein verehrt. Die Bewohner zeigen eine Quelle, in welcher ſich ein guter Fiſch befindet; ihn zu eſſen, wird für Sünde gehalten, weil dieſer Fiſch den Scheiterhaufen, welcher für Abraham bereitet worden war, ausgelöſcht haben ſoll.** Auch kennen die Bewohner dieſes Ortes die Quelle, aus welcher Rebecca, die ſie Rafka nennen, für den treuen Diener Abraham's und ſeine Kameele geſchöpft haben ſoll, als er dorthin kam, um für den Sohn ſeines Herrn eine Frau zu holen.***

* 1. B. Moſ. 11, 28.
** Midraſch Bereſchit 38. (Von dieſem Wunder weiß der Midraſch nichts.)
*** Teixeira 186: Orfa, ciudad antiquiſima, llamada en otro tiempo Ur, ado los Caldeos quiezieron quemar a Abraham, y hay aun oy en ella lugar con este titulo tenido en grande veneracion; y muestran alli una fuente en cuya agua se cria buen pescado, comer del qual se tiene por sacrilegio, porque dizen que fue criada miraculosamente para apagar el fuego en que querian quemar el santo Patriarcha: fuera de aqueste pueblo se vé un pozo, que affirman ser aquel se cuya agua Rebeca (a quien el loz dizen Rafka) dió de beuer al criado de Abraham, que yua a buscar muger para Izach, y a sus camellos.

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sehr regelmäßig, die Deckengewölbe sind glatt, steinerne Säulen, aus einem Stücke bestehend, stehen noch aufrecht, andere sind umgestürzt, alle jedoch sind hohl und werden von Schlangen und Scorpionen bewohnt, schreckliche Gäste, die in ihrer säcularen Ruhe zu stören nicht gerathen sein möchte. — Einige dieser Grotten sind mit einer Art Vorhof versehen, und dienen heute den Schafheerden als Lagerplätze.

Die Juden sowohl wie die Muselmänner glauben und bestätigen die Ortssage, daß der berühmte Jäger Nimrod, der als Städteerbauer in der Bibel bezeichnet wird,[1] mit seinem Volke hier gewohnt habe.[2]

Eine Stunde von Nimrodsstadt besuchte ich noch eine andere Grotte, über welcher ein schönes von Bäumen umpflanztes arabisches Haus errichtet ist. Hier soll das Haus des Job gewesen sein, und neben demselben befindet sich eine Höhle, wo der fromme Dulder von Aussatz und Kummer heimgesucht gesessen und den Besuch seiner Freunde empfangen haben soll. In den benachbarten Felsen sind tiefe Höhlen, die dem Job als Kornmagazine dienten und von den Arabern noch heute zu demselben Zwecke gebraucht werden. Im Hofe bei dem Hause ist ein mit sehr gutem Wasser versehener Brunnen.

In Urfa wohnen gegen 150 jüdische Familien;[3] sie sind frei und glücklich, jedoch so unwissend, daß kaum 50 Personen unter ihnen ihr Gebet verrichten können.

Das Dorf Charan, welches in der Bibel wohl bekannt ist, weil dort Terach, der Vater Abraham's, gestorben,[4] liegt sechs Stunden weiter nördlich. An diesem Orte soll auch Rebecca ihrem Manne den Rath gegeben haben, Jacob möge vor seinem Bruder Esau fliehen.[5] — Die Araber zeigen eine halbe Meile von Charan einen sehr tiefen mit einem Stein bedeckten Brunnen, und berichten, daß es der in der Bibel[6] erwähnte Brunnen sei.

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1 1. B. Moses Cap. 10, V. 11.

2 Ritter's Erdkunde Th. 11, S. 317.

3 Ritter's Erdkunde Th. 11, S. 327 führt 500 Juden an.

4 1. B. Moses Cap. 11, V. 32.

5 1. B. Moses Cap. 27, V. 43.

6 1. B. Moses Cap. 29, V. 2. 3. 8. 10.

Bergbewohner, die von ihren Nachbarn Bené-Haramachim genannt werden, sind in der Nähe von Charan, etwa einen Tagemarsch entfernt, ansässig.

Siwerek. Tschermuk.

Am Tage nach meiner Abreise von Urfa wurde die Karawane, welcher ich mich angeschlossen hatte, von Arabern angefallen. Ich wandte mich an den Hauptmann und bot ihm meine Unterwerfung an. Die Karawane leistete einen kurzen vergeblichen Widerstand, wonach unsere Reisenden zu Gefangenen gemacht, gebunden und geknebelt wurden; ich selbst aber war frei und wurde in meinen mahomedanischen Kleidern in das Zelt des Befehlshabers geführt. Beim Anbruch der Nacht bot ich ihm einen Trank an, der nichts anderes als guter Branntwein war[1]; er trank ohne Argwohn und verfiel bald nachher in einen tiefen Schlaf. Darauf verständigte ich mich mit meinen Reisegefährten; während der Nacht lösten alle ihre Fesseln und wir befreiten uns. Wir bemächtigten uns der Hauptbanditen, fesselten diese, und baten dann im nächsten Dorfe um Hülfe. In der Nähe von Siwerek jedoch überfiel uns eine Schaar Reiter, wir mußten unsere Gefangenen laufen lassen und selbst flüchten. Am folgenden Tage kamen wir nach einer Reise von drei Tagen in Siwerek an.

Siwerek ist eine sehr alte Stadt, mitten in einer sehr wüsten Gegend liegend und von einer halb in Trümmer zerfallenen Mauer umgeben, an deren einer Seite ein pyramidenförmiger Thurm steht. Die Häuser der Stadt sind klein und von Backsteinen erbaut; alles macht den Eindruck von Elend und Armuth, doch ist der Kornmarkt bedeutend und reichlich versehen. In der Nähe der Stadt liegen die Ruinen einer Citadelle.

Es wohnen nur vier jüdische Familien in diesem Orte; doch war die Gemeinde früher viel zahlreicher; berühmte Rabbinen wohnten dort, und der Handel blühte. Aber die Pest, diese Geißel

[1] Die Beduinen kennen keinen Branntwein.

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des Morgenlandes, raffte eine große Anzahl der früheren Bewohner fort. Eine Stunde von der Stadt liegt ein sehr geräumiger jüdischer Begräbnißplatz, auf welchem sich so alterthümliche Grabmale befinden, daß es mir unmöglich war, die Data oder die Inschriften zu entziffern.

Von Siwerek aus führt in nördlicher Richtung der Weg durch eine Gebirgsgegend von ungeheuren Felsenklippen, ungesund wegen der vielen dort befindlichen Sümpfe; es ist das Gebirge Kirwantschimen Dagh, von den Juden Tur Talga (Schneeberg) genannt. Um die Gegend zu bereisen, bedient man sich besonders dazu dressirter Maulesel.

Die Juden der Umgegend nennen die Bewohner des Gebirges Ammoniter oder Moabiter, indem sie glauben, es seien die Abkömmlinge der in der Bibel oft erwähnten Stämme Ammon und Moab, die noch ihre alten Wohnsitze behaupten. Ich habe eine Nacht unter diesen Gebirgsbewohnern in dem kleinen Dörfchen Kirwan zugebracht und ein gastfreies Obdach gefunden. Mein Dolmetscher fragte sie, ob sie von dem Volke Ammon oder von Moab abstammten, worauf uns erwiedert wurde, man wisse es nicht, alles was man behaupten könne, sei, daß die heutigen Einwohner Nachkömmlinge beider Nationen seien. Sie sprechen eine besondere Sprache, die sehr verwandt mit den Zeichen der kurdischen ist, welche, wie ich bereits erwähnte, viele chaldäische Buchstaben besitzt. Ihre Häuser sind sehr groß, von Lehm gebaut und außen mit Kalk ausgeputzt; um den immerwährenden Frost abzuhalten, wird im Innern der Wohnungen stets ein starkes Feuer unterhalten. Das Klima ist dasselbe wie in Kurdistan in Persien; die Menschen selbst sind kräftig gebaut; ihre Hauptbeschäftigung ist der Ackerbau, neben welchem sie etwas Handel mit Schafen, Rindvieh und Maulesel treiben. Der Charakter des Volkes ist derb, sogar wild, und sie bilden, abgesondert von den umwohnenden Völkern, eine Art unabhängiger Republik. Die Volkstracht besteht in einem grob gewebten Mantel, ähnlich denen, die man in der Moldau trägt, dazu türkische Beinkleider, die bis auf die mit Sandalen bekleideten Füße herabfallen, und einer Kopfbedeckung von Lammsfellen oder einem langen Filzhute ohne Rand, der einer straffgezogenen Nachtmütze gleicht.

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Ich verließ diese Gebirge in Begleitung des Moabiten, der mich beherbergt hatte, und eines Glaubensgenossen. Der höchst beschwerliche Weg, der über Gebirgspässe und tiefe Schluchten führt, ist nur unter Leitung eines Wegweisers zu passiren, den ich in der Person meines moabitischen Wirthes besaß. Mitten in einem tiefen, rings von Felsen eingeschlossenen Hohlwege, nahe an dem dahin rauschenden Flusse Kyzilischibu-Tschay, blieb mein Wegweiser plötzlich stehen und befahl mir, ihm den Inhalt meines Felleisens zu zeigen. Auf meine Frage, ob vielleicht eine Grenze in der Nähe sei und ob er das Recht eines Zöllners ausüben dürfe, erwiederte er kurz, er wolle es so. Ich schickte mich darauf scheinbar an, seinem Wunsche Folge zu leisten, benutzte aber einen günstigen Augenblick, als er den Rücken wandte, und schlug ihm meinen Mantel über den Kopf. Des Gebrauchs seiner Hände beraubt, band ich ihn mit Hülfe meines Glaubensgenossen und nahm ihn mit nach Tschermuk; dort mußte ich ihn jedoch bald wieder laufen lassen, weil ich keinen türkischen Beamten finden konnte.

Tschermuk liegt am Gebirge Mehrab Dagh. Die jüdische Gemeinde der Stadt zählt ungefähr hundert Familien, die jedoch, den immerwährenden Räubereien ausgesetzt, in trostlosem Zustande leben. Ihre Sitten und Kleider sind die mahomedanischen.

Eine Stunde von Tschermuk befinden sich zahlreiche heiße Mineralquellen; sie werden in einem steinernen Becken in einer Grotte aufgefangen und dienen den Bewohnern der Stadt zum öffentlichen Bade. Ich selbst hatte Gelegenheit, die Heilkraft dieser Brunnen zu erproben, denn verwundet und erschöpft wurde ich durch den zehntägigen Gebrauch derselben für den geringen Preis von 5 Para (3 Centimes) pro Bad völlig hergestellt. Nicht weit von den Quellen ist ein Gasthaus für die Badegäste angelegt.

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Capitel 8.

Diarbekr.

Die Stadt. — Ausflug in Armenien. — Esra's Manuscript. — Nisibin. Grab des Rabbi Jehuda ben Betera. — Jüdische Dörfer von Tselma gegründet. — Djestreh. — Zakuh. — Ungewöhnliche Gebräuche. — Sonderbare Heirath.

Um nach der wichtigen Stadt Diarbekr zu gelangen, gebrauchte ich zwei Tagereisen durch die Gebirge, in welchen die Vegetation eine sehr dürftige, und von Bebauung wenig Spuren zu finden sind. Hier sowol wie in andern morgenländischen Ortschaften müssen die Juden ein besonderes Stadtviertel bewohnen, jedoch beruht diese Absonderung lediglich in den Sitten der Morgenländer, und hat nichts ausschließendes, verächtliches an sich, wie das sogenannte Ghetto in Rom. Gegen 250 jüdische Familien bewohnen Diarbekr, unter denen sich zwar kein Gelehrter befindet, mehrere jedoch gründliche Kenntnisse unserer Dogmen besitzen und den Text der Bibel verstehen.

In einem Winkel der Synagoge befindet sich ein besonderes kleines stets verschlossenes Gemach, welches nicht allein bei den Juden, sondern auch bei den Bekennern anderer Religionen in außerordentlicher Achtung steht, weil, wie man behauptet, dort einmal der Prophet Elias erschienen sei. In einer Mauernische dieses Gemaches wird ein in sogenannter assyrischer (hebräischer Quadrat-) Schrift geschriebener Pentateuch aufbewahrt. Derselbe, ein schöner Band in gewöhnlicher Größe, wird nur einmal im Jahre, am Vorabend des Versöhnungstages (am Col-Nidre) gezeigt, an welchem Tage man ihn auf dem heiligen Tische (Schulchan) auslegt, worauf dann alle Frommen herantreten und ihn mit größter Ehrfurcht küssen. Als Chacham war es mir leicht, die Erlaubniß zur Ansicht dieses so hochverehrten Denkmals zu erhalten; ich fand jedoch nichts außerordentlich Bemerkenswerthes daran. Es ist auf sehr dickes Pergament geschrieben, die Buch-

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staben gleichen denen unserer Pentateuche, die Schrift ist aber schwerfällig, manche Stellen sind unleserlich geworden, mehre sogar ganz verwischt. Die dortigen Juden behaupten, dieser Pentateuch sei von Esra eigenhändig geschrieben.

Auf meine Frage nach dem Ursprung dieser Reliquie wurde mir mitgetheilt, daß dieselbe früher im Besitz der sehr zahlreichen jüdischen Gemeinde zu Mardin gewesen sei, von dieser jedoch, da sie häufigen Plünderungen ausgesetzt war, der Gemeinde zu Diarbekr anvertraut wurde, welche letztere sich dann später weigerte, das Werk an die ehemaligen Besitzer zurückzugeben. In Mardin fand ich diese Angabe durch eine Quittung über die richtige Ablieferung des Buches an die Gemeinde zu Diarbekr, von den Vorstehern und Vornehmsten der letztern unterzeichnet, bestätigt. Die Gemeinde zu Mardin war, wie ich bei fernerer Nachforschung erfuhr, auf folgende Weise in den Besitz des Werkes gekommen. Die jüdischen Glaubensgenossen zu Nisibin (jetzt von Juden und Arabern Neitzibin genannt) hatten sich, von einer Räuberhorde überfallen, nach Mardin geflüchtet und den Pentateuch mit dorthin gebracht; nach ihrer Angabe soll er aus der Jeschiba (Akademie) des Rabbi Jehuda ben Betera, eines ausgezeichneten Gelehrten des Talmud, der zu Neitzibin eine Akademie gehalten hat, herrühren, und, wie die Tradition hinzufügt, von der eigenen Hand Esra's geschrieben sein; auch sollen noch viele andere Handschriften desselben zu gleicher Zeit dort gefunden, jedoch in Folge zahlreicher Ueberfälle und Plünderungen verloren gegangen sein.

Da mich die Reliquie lebhaft interessirte, so zog ich noch bei manchen Anderen Erkundigungen ein, und namentlich einer der in Mardin lebenden Juden, ein ehrwürdiger Greis, der mir wie ein Prophet in der Wüste vorkam, erzählte mir mit fast denselben Worten dieselbe Thatsache.

Das Werk ist ohne Zweifel ein sehr alterthümliches, der specielleren Forschung eines Kenners in jeder Hinsicht werth. Da bisher noch von keinem Gelehrten eine Ansicht darüber ausgesprochen ist, so schätze ich mich glücklich, der erste zu sein, der, wenn auch nur durch Erzählung der verbreiteten Sagen, etwas über dasselbe mittheilt, wobei ich nur bedaure, daß es mir unmöglich war, alle meine Aufmerksamkeit der Form der „Petuchot

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und S'etumoth",[1] der Buchstaben und mancher anderen bei den Juden des deutschen und des portugiesischen Ritus verschiedenen Punkte, widmen und durch die Autorität dieses alten Codex zur Entscheidung bringen zu können. Hätte ich geahnt, von welcher Wichtigkeit dieser Pentateuch für die Judenwelt ist, so würde ich sicher meine ganze Zeit und Kraft daran gewandt haben, um ein erwünschteres Resultat darüber zu liefern; ich werde jedoch vielleicht während meiner demnächstigen zweiten Reise dies nachzuholen vermögen.

Die Stadt Diarbekr ist von einer hohen Mauer umschlossen, die noch von der römischen Eroberung herrührt, wie mehrere bis heute erhaltene lateinische Inschriften bekunden. Diese sehr feste Mauer zieht sich längs einer Kette von Granitfelsen hin, welche steil hinab bis in das Bett des Tigris fallen, der hier wenigstens zwanzig Fuß Tiefe hat, schiffbar ist und den Verbindungsweg nach den berühmten Städten Mussul und Bagdad bildet. Die Schifffahrt jedoch ist eine gefährliche, da die Schiffe häufig auf Felsen gerathen und von den ungestümen Wellen verschlungen werden. Eine andere bedeutende Gefahr entsteht durch das Schmelzen des Schnees in den Gebirgen, der sich dann in furchtbaren Strömen herabstürzt, ganze Erdschollen und Felsstücke mit sich reißt, sie auf die Schiffe schleudert und diese dadurch zertrümmert oder in den Grund bohrt. Ich selbst war Augenzeuge davon, daß ein Schiff mit Mannschaft und Ladung auf solche Weise unterging, wobei sich nur ein Matrose zu retten vermochte.

Die Bauart dieser Schiffe, welche in der kurzen Zeit von zwei bis drei Tagen vollständig fertig gemacht werden, ist sehr einfach. Man schlachtet eine Anzahl Ziegen, denen man, ohne sie aufzuschneiden, die Haut abzieht. Diese Felle werden am abgeschnittenen Kopfende und anderen offenen Stellen zugenäht und dann straff aufgeblasen, so daß sie große Blasen bilden. Solche Blasen verbindet man in zwölf Reihen von je zwölf Stück,[2] und

[1] Petuchot und S'etumoth sind verschiedene Formen der Absätze im Pentateuch.

[2] Ritter's Erdkunde Th. 11, S. 64, beschreibt ebenfalls diese Fahrzeuge, nur sind dort 59 Felle zu einem solchen Schiffe gehörig angegeben. Unsere Angabe ist aber richtig, da wir selbst mehrmals dieselben gesehen und auf ihnen gefahren sind.

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legt auf dieselben ins Gevierte Holzbalken, an welche man die Blasen befestigt. Ueber dieses Untergestell werden Bretter gelegt und darauf die Waaren verpackt. Diese Fahrzeuge schwimmen sehr leicht auf dem Wasser, wenn sie aber kräftig an einen Felsen stoßen, so springen die aufgeblasenen Felle, und die Waaren und Effecten liegen im Wasser.

Diarbekr zählte in früheren Jahren über 80,000 Einwohner, die durch die Verheerungen der Pest auf ein Drittel herabgesunken sind; die Seuche hat jedoch ausschließlich den nördlichen Theil heimgesucht, dessen leerstehende Häuser man in Ruinen zerfallen läßt. Die Stadt treibt bedeutenden Handel mit Anatolien, Damascus, Aleppo, Mussul, Bagdad und Kurdistan. Die Industrie ist blühend und ihre Erzeugnisse weit berühmt, namentlich finden sich geschickte Silberarbeiter und Waffenschmiede dort. Köstliche Gärten umgeben die Stadt, die auch im Innern durch großartige Gebäude, zahlreiche Magazine, viele mit schönen Marmorsäulen gezierte Springbrunnen, vor allem aber durch eine prachtvolle Moschee ausgezeichnet ist. Auch die Räumlichkeiten der Häuser sind mit vieler Sorgfalt zierlich und sauber gehalten.

Die Stadtmauern, deren ich bereits oben erwähnte, sind so ungeheuer breit, daß ein Wagen bequem darauf umkehren kann. Auf der Höhe derselben, zu welcher man durch Terrassen hinaufsteigt, sind mehre Häuser errichtet. — Als ich eines Tages mit mehren Glaubensgenossen, unter denen sich auch mein Wirth Isaak Misrachi befand, um die Festung ging, von wo man die herrlichste Aussicht auf die Stadt und die malerische Gegend genießt, äußerte ich den Wunsch, zu untersuchen, was jene Häuser enthielten. Meine Gefährten wollten mir erschrocken ein solches Verlangen ausreden, indem sie behaupteten, es hausten Geister in diesen Häusern und jede Neugier sei gefährlich. Ich ließ mich jedoch von meinem Vorsatze nicht abbringen und trat entschlossen in eines der Gebäude, in welchem mir nichts Ungewöhnliches begegnete, da ich es leer und öde fand. Bei meiner Zurückkunft erst wurde mir der wahre Grund dieser allgemeinen Furcht mitgetheilt. Es haben nämlich viele muselmännische Weiber heimliche Zusammenkünfte mit jungen Armeniern in diesen entlegenen Gebäuden, über welche das tiefste Geheimniß bewahrt wird und

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bei denen man aus Vorsicht nur bewaffnet erscheint, so daß der Neugierige Gefahr läuft, sein Eindringen in solche Geheimnisse mit dem Leben zu bezahlen. — Ich fand dies später bestätigt, als ich ein zweites Haus untersuchen wollte; denn kaum hatte ich einen Schritt hinein gethan, als eine Kugel an mir vorbeisauste, worauf mir natürlich die Lust zu ferneren Forschungen verging.

Man spricht in Diarbekr arabisch, türkisch und armenisch. Die Juden bedienen sich nur des Arabischen. Der Nationalcharakter der Bewohner ist ein sanfter; die allgemein übliche Kleidung die türkische, wovon jedoch die Europäer, die in ihrer heimischen Tracht umhergehen, eine Ausnahme machen.

Zwei Tagereisen von Diarbekr liegt die Stadt Mardin, am Berge Djschebel Mardin, auf dessen Spitze sich die Ruinen eines alten Schlosses befinden. Gegen 50 israelitische Familien wohnen dort,[1] die, obgleich sie auf ein besonderes Stadtviertel angewiesen sind, doch ziemlich frei leben. Sie treiben meistens Ackerbau, kleiden sich mahomedanisch und sprechen arabisch. Ihr Nassi heißt Mailum Moses.

Nach zwei Tagereisen gelangt man von Mardin aus nach Nisibin; die Juden nennen die Stadt Neitzibin, welchen letzteren Namen auch der Talmud angiebt. Diese am Tschak-schak belegene, früher nicht unwichtige Stadt soll nach dem Targum von Jerusalem das Accad der Bibel sein. Es wohnen jetzt nur zwei Juden[2] daselbst, ein Vater mit seinem Sohne; der Vater Mailum Samuel ist Schächter, der Name des Sohnes ist Isaak.

Auf dem eine Stunde von der Stadt belegenen Begräbnißplatze, in dessen Nähe man merkwürdige Ruinen von Römerbauten trifft, befindet sich das Grab des Rabbi Jehuda ben Betera[3],

[1] Ritter's Erdkunde 11. Th., S. 390, wird eine bedeutend größere Anzahl Juden angeführt.

[2] Benjamin de Tudela S. 51 spricht von 1000 Juden. — Pethachia S. 193 giebt 2800 an; derselbe spricht auf Seite 170 von einer Synagoge von Rabbi Jehouda ben Betera zu Nisibin. — Ritter's Erdkunde Th. 11, S. 426 erwähnt ebenfalls des Grabes und sagt, es sei eine Ruine über demselben. Jetzt findet sich, wie oben gesagt, dieses nicht mehr.

[3] Benjamin de Tudela S. 45 sagt, daß das Grab des Rabbi Jehouda ben Betera im Dorfe Meron in Palästina sich befinde. Ich glaube aber, daß meine Angabe nach dem Talmud Pessachim Fol. 3 richtiger ist.

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welches als Gegenstand allgemeiner Verehrung das Ziel vieler Wallfahrten ist. Früher stand über dem Grabe ein Haus, das jedoch vor ungefähr zehn Jahren auf Befehl eines neuen Pascha abgerissen wurde, und dessen Steine man zur Errichtung einer Kaserne benutzte. Einer der herausgenommenen Steine soll nach glaubwürdiger Versicherung eine Inschrift zum Andenken an den berühmten Talmudisten enthalten; es war mir jedoch trotz angestrengter Nachforschungen nicht möglich, denselben aufzufinden. Man bezeichnete mir einen ungefähr fünf Fuß hohen runden Stein als das Monument seines Grabes. Eine Inschrift konnte ich auf demselben nicht entdecken. Der Pascha selbst ist, der allgemeinen Meinung nach zur Strafe für die Entweihung, in demselben Jahre gestorben. — Auf demselben Begräbnißplatze sollen, wie man sagt, die Gebeine noch anderer Talmudisten ruhen; doch deutet kein Monument und keine historische Spur auf die Richtigkeit dieser Angabe.

Tselma. — Die Dörfer der Juden.

Zwei Stunden von Nisibin liegt in südöstlicher Richtung das Dorf Tselma. Nach dem alten biblischen Gebrauche, der im Orient noch immer befolgt wird, trägt das Dorf den Namen seines Gründers, eines in der Gegend durch seinen Reichthum, seinen edlen Charakter und seine bewährte kriegerische Tapferkeit berühmten allgemein verehrten Juden.

Ein Pascha, der Tselma geneigt war, schenkte ihm eine beträchtliche Strecke Ackers. Tselma baute eine Anzahl Häuser dort auf und bot diese den Arabern und Armeniern zu freier Benutzung an, unter der Bedingung, daß sie seine Felder bebauen möchten. So entstand und vergrößerte sich nach und nach das genannte Dörfchen. Tselma, der bei einem Einfalle plündernder Horden durch seinen persönlichen Muth dieselben zurückschlug, stieg immer mehr in der Achtung der Bewohner des Dorfes, so daß er jetzt als angesehener Gebieter dort herrscht. Nach morgenländischer Sitte hat er zwei Frauen, die ihm sieben Kinder geboren haben. Ich blieb zwei Tage lang bei dieser wahrhaften

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Patriarchenfamilie und erfreute mich vielfacher Beweise von Liebe und Theilnahme. Auch einige andere Glaubensgenossen haben sich dort angesiedelt.

Eine Stunde von Tselma zieht sich die Gebirgskette von Djebel-Sandjack hin, welche die Juden für die Gebirge von Seir halten.[1] Ich machte dort Ausflüge in die Dörfer, die hauptsächlich von Juden bewohnt sind, und fand bei diesen Besuchen, in welch tiefer Unwissenheit dieselben leben. Die Bibel ist ihnen ein todter Buchstabe, ein Buch mit sieben Siegeln; sie üben nur wenige äußere traditionelle Pflichten, ohne jedoch den inneren Werth derselben zu kennen und zu verstehen. Am Sabbath kommen sie zwar in der Synagoge zusammen, jedoch muß der Chacham, der allein lesen kann, für Alle beten; er liest dabei die gewöhnlichen Wochenabschnitte aus einem gedruckten Pentateuch, denn geschriebene Gesetzesrollen giebt es nicht.

Sie beschäftigen sich hauptsächlich mit Ackerbau, treiben etwas Kleinviehzucht und verfertigen einige Stoffe, wenige nur machen Handelsgeschäfte. — Häufig von den Kurden bedroht, wissen sie sich zu vertheidigen und nehmen an den Kämpfen, in welche die stets wandernden Horden unter sich verwickelt sind, thätigen Antheil, da sie für die eine odere andere derselben Partei nehmen müssen. Ihre Sprache ist die kurdische.

Dschesireh. — Sachn.

Nach ungefähr zehntägigem Aufenthalt in diesen Dörfern kam ich über Kufri nach Dschesireh am Tigris, am Fuße des Gebirges Djebel-Djudi, welches die Juden Erez-Gezera nennen und für die in der Bibel erwähnte wüste Gegend halten.[2] Ich halte diese Meinung jedoch für irrig, obgleich ich mich zur Mittheilung derselben verpflichtet glaube. — Sie behaupten ferner, daß der von den Arabern Djebel-Djudi genannte Berg, an dessen

[1] Ich bewies ihnen jedoch, daß diese Tradition jedenfalls unrichtig sei, da die Gebirge von Seir an der Südgrenze von Palästina liegen.

[2] 3. Buch Moses Cap. 16, V. 22.

Außen mit einer Art Mörtel angestrichen. Im Sommer schläft man auf den Terrassen, um den Stichen der Scorpionen zu entgehen, die sich während dieser Jahreszeit häufig Nachts in den Häusern aufhalten. Die Nahrungsmittel werden so schlecht zubereitet, daß sie dem ärmsten Europäer Ekel erregen würden.

VII.

Ueberall wohin ich während der Ernte und Weinlese kam, fand ich einen sowohl von den Juden wie von den Kurden strenge befolgten Gebrauch, der mich an die Vorschriften der Bibel erinnerte.[1] Man sammelt nämlich niemals die Aehren, Trauben oder Früchte gänzlich ein, sondern man läßt den Antheil der Wittwen und Waisen stehen; es ist sogar gestattet, auf ein reifes Kornfeld zu gehen, dort Halme zu brechen und das Korn aus denselben an Ort und Stelle in Wasser abzukochen, doch dürfen die Aehren nicht geschnitten[2] und nicht mitgenommen werden. In den Weinbergen darf man Trauben pflücken und dieselben dort verzehren.[3]

Die Erstlingsgeschenke aller Arten von Früchten, welche die Juden ihrem Mailum, die Kurden ihrem Kadi darbringen, sind in Körbe aus Dattel- oder andern Blättern gestellt, und erinnern meiner Ansicht nach an die Opfer, welche in alten Zeiten die Juden ihren Priestern darbrachten.

Außer diesem werden noch mehre andere im Einklange mit der Bibel stehende Gebräuche in sehr frommer Weise befolgt, von welchen ich einige hier mittheile.

Wenn man auf dem Felde zwischen zwei Ortschaften einen Leichnam findet, so begeben sich die Obrigkeiten der umliegenden Orte auf den Platz, um durch genaue Ausmessung zu bestimmen,[4] welcher Stadt oder welchem Dorfe der Leichnam am nächsten liegt; der betreffende Ort muß dann das Blutgeld an die Familie des Todten zahlen. Kann man bei dieser Ausmessung nicht einig

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1 3. B. Moses Cap. 19, V. 9 und 10.
2 5. B. Moses Cap. 23, V. 26.
3 5. B. Moses Cap. 23, V. 25.
4 5. B. Moses Cap. 21, V. 2.

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Piaster) gefordert. An der Nord- und Westseite ist die Stadt durch Wassergräben geschützt.

Sachu am Chabur. Es wohnen etwa 200 jüdische Familien in dieser Stadt, die sich theilweise vom Handel mit den benachbarten Kurden ernähren, oder als Handwerker Wollstoffe und ähnliche derartige Fabrikate verfertigen; sie sind meist wohlhabend, doch leben sie in großer Unwissenheit.

Die Bewohner der Stadt haben eine sonderbare Sitte, welche ich, den Leser um Nachsicht bittend, hier mitzutheilen wage. Es fehlt nämlich in der Stadt gänzlich an Apartements (St. Malo in der Bretagne hat denselben Mangel), und es begeben sich deshalb die Einwohner jeden Morgen in großen Massen an die Ufer des Chaburflusses, um dort in anständiger Entfernung von einander, die Frauen an der einen, die Männer an der andern Seite, ihre Bedürfnisse zu befriedigen, wobei es manchmal zu Streitigkeiten kommt. Die christliche sowol wie die kurdische Bevölkerung befolgt dieselbe Sitte.

Es wohnen in der Stadt zwei Rabbinen, von denen der eine, Rabbi Schalom, sehr reich ist; der zweite, Rabbi Eliahu, ist wohlhabend. Die feinere Bildung der Rabbinen offenbart sich darin, daß sie Morgens früh ihren Spaziergang an den Strom allein machen, was ich für sehr anständig halte. Eines Tages ließ mich Mailum Eliahu einer sehr wichtigen Angelegenheit wegen zu sich rufen und ich fand ihn bei meiner Ankunft über das Buch Beth Joseph gebückt. Er erzählte mir dann: Ein Jude, der in den benachbarten Dörfern mit Waaren umhergezogen, sei seit einiger Zeit verschollen, seine Frau halte ihn für todt und verlange sich wieder zu verheirathen. Er, der Mailum, glaube nun zwar dazu berechtigt zu sein, der Frau diese Erlaubniß zu ertheilen, wolle aber doch vorher meine Meinung über die Sache hören. — Ich erklärte darauf, daß, da der Mann vielleicht noch lebe oder gezwungen worden sei den Islam anzunehmen, und da in diesem Falle die Frau in der Gewalt ihres Ehegatten stehe, so dürfe diese keine neue Ehe contrahiren, da dieselbe nur als Concubinat betrachtet werden könne. — Der Rabbi erwiederte mir darauf, daß die junge Frau, sich selbst überlassen, Gefahr laufe, sich zu vergessen. — Auf meinen ferneren Einwand, daß in unseren

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Ländern kein Rabbi es wagen würde, eine so wichtige Frage ohne den Rath seiner Collegen zu entscheiden, entgegnete er mir, er sei der größte Rabbi des Landes, seine Verordnungen seien vollgültig und würden ohne weitere Berufung angenommen und ausgeführt. — Dabei blieb es und die Frau erhielt die Erlaubniß zur zweiten Ehe von ihm.

Sechs Stunden von der Stadt erheben sich die Spitzen eines großen Gebirges, das sich der kurdistanischen Gebirgskette anschließt. Die Juden behaupten, es sei der Ararath, und hier sei nach der Sündfluth die Arche Noah's stehen geblieben. Wir finden in der Bibel[1] das Wort Ararath, welches der Targum Onkulus mit Toure Kardu[2] (Gebirge von Kurdistan) übersetzt, nach welchem das Land seinen Namen erhalten hat. Der Berg hat sehr steile, fast senkrechte Abhänge und um den Gipfel zu erreichen, soll man sechs Stunden gebrauchen. Von der Sündfluth werden hier wunderbare Dinge erzählt. Eine der kurdischen Völkerschaften besteigt jährlich gegen Ende Juni die Gipfel des Berges und verweilt auf demselben einen Tag in Andachtsübungen, wobei große Fackeln angezündet werden; sie behauptet aus dem königlichen Hause Sanherib abzustammen und erhält unter sich die Sage, daß der König Sanherib selbst dem Andenken der Arche einen Gottesdienst gehalten habe.[3] Beim Herabsteigen von dem Berge bringen sie einige Ueberbleibsel der Arche mit sich, die ihrer Aussage nach tief im Boden liegen. Die erhaltenen Stückchen sind in Bretterform, weißlich grau, einige auch schwarz und durchlöchert. Es ist mir nicht möglich, eine genauere Beschreibung dieser kurdischen Festlichkeit zu geben, da sie bei meiner Anwesenheit nicht stattfand, und ich berichte nur, was ich auf meine Fragen erfuhr.

Am Fuße des Berges stehen vier steinerne Säulen, die, wie die Einwohner sagen, ehemals zu einem Altar dienten. Der Volksglaube hält den Altar für denjenigen, welchen Noah bei

[1] 1. Buch Moses Cap. 8, V. 4.

[2] Pethachia S. 176 erzählt, daß dort viele tausend Juden gewohnt hätten, und beschreibt die Ursache, weshalb sie von dort versprengt worden.

[3] Der Talmud erwähnt und erklärt dasselbe aus dem Worte „Nisroch" (Jesaias Cap. 37, V. 38).

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seinem Aussteigen aus der Arche errichtete;[1] auch will man wissen, daß seine Gebeine hier begraben liegen, ohne jedoch den Platz genau zu bezeichnen. — Ich selbst besaß einige angebliche Fragmente der Arche, die mit einer theerartigen Masse überzogen schienen, doch wurde ich derselben so wie vieler anderer Sachen bei einer Plünderung zwischen Bagdad und Konstantinopel, drei Tagereisen von Sivas und zwanzig von Scutari, beraubt. Ich verlor bei dieser Gelegenheit auch einige in assyrischen Lettern geschriebene Manuscripte, was mich mehr als der Verlust meines Vermögens schmerzte.

Capitel 9.

Erste Reise in die Gebirge von Kurdistan.

Betrachtungen über die Zerstreuung der zehn Stämme. — Sandur. — Deik. — Tamra. — Grotte des Propheten Elias. — Alkusch. — Grab des Propheten Nahum. — Wallfahrten und Ceremonien bei diesem Grabe.

Als ich bei meiner Ankunft in diese Länder sah, in welch glücklicher Lage sich die dort wohnenden Juden befinden, als ich sah, wie sie frei von aller Bedrückung in den blühendsten Verhältnissen leben, konnte ich mich des Gedankens nicht erwehren, daß gerade dieses Land es war, in welchem die uralte Zerstreuung der Kinder Israels stattfand, das Land, wo sie nach dem biblischen Ausdrucke „verloren gegangen.“ Hierher ließ Tiglath Pilesser sie bringen;[2] und bei dem Vergleich jener Zeiten der Vergangenheit voll Trübsal und Schmerzen mit denen der glücklichen Gegenwart dachte ich an die Worte der heiligen Schrift: „Und die Verlornen in Assur werden wieder versammelt werden.“[3]

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[1] 1. Buch Moses Cap. 8, V. 20.
[2] 2. Buch der Könige Cap. 15, V. 29.
[3] Jesaias Cap. 27, V. 13.

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Warum nannte sie der Prophet „verloren“, die heute dieses blühende Land bewohnen, das Land, durch welches sich die Straße der großen Karawanen hinzieht, die überall auf ihrem Wege Leben und Wohlstand verbreiten; das Land, wo sie glücklich und zufrieden leben? Und dennoch sind die Worte der heiligen Schrift voll Wahrheit; denn weil die Kinder Israels sie bewohnen, sind diese Regionen von Schicksalen heimgesucht.

Die Spannung, mit der ich meine Nachforschungen begann, war eine große. Alle Wohnungen wurden sorgsam untersucht und die Bewohner befragt, um das Geheimniß, das mich beherrschte, zu durchdringen, und mit jeder Frage glaubte ich einen Schritt näher am Ziele der Wahrheit zu sein.

Meine Glaubensbrüder theilten mir mit, daß diese sich weithin dehnenden Gebirgsstrecken von Juden bewohnt sind, die, unter den Kurden zerstreut lebend, niemals aus den Bergen hervorkommen und so abgeschlossen von der Welt gleichsam fortvegetiren. — Trotz aller Vorstellungen von unübersteigbaren Hindernissen, die man mir machte, faßte ich den Entschluß sie aufzusuchen und in das Innere dieser Gebirge zu dringen, wohin keine Karawane kommen kann, wo Gefahren aller Art bei jedem Schritte drohen. Ich erkrankte, meine Brüder spendeten mir Trost und Beileid; ich aber erklärte ihnen Worte der heiligen Schrift und sprach von der Pflicht, die ich mir auferlegt, die Verlornen der zehn Stämme Israels aufzusuchen: „ich werde genesen“, sprach ich, „wenn ich meine Brüder sehe, deren Dasein die Welt nicht ahnt, die jenes Land bewohnen, das kein Reisender durchdringt.“ Meine Vorstellungen und Bitten hatten endlich guten Erfolg und mehre Begleiter boten sich mir an. „Denn siehe da kommt er, er springt auf die Berge und hat sie überschritten.“[1] — Mich dem Schutze des Ewigen befehlend reiste ich ab.

Der Leser wolle mir folgen in jene unwirthbaren Gebirge, wo die Gräber mancher Reisenden mahnend sich erheben, um den Eindringling abzuschrecken von der furchtbaren Wildniß, die er betritt, um ihm Zeugniß zu geben von der drohenden Gefahr, der er entgegengeht. — Je weiter ich kam, um so schwieriger wurde

[1] Hohelied Salomonis Cap. 2, V. 8.

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die Reise. Für Reiter sind diese schmalen, abschüssigen Stege unüberwindlich, und oftmals war ich genöthigt auf Händen und Füßen empor zu klimmen; von Zeit zu Zeit nur findet man einen einzelnen Granatapfel- und Feigenbaum.

Ich langte zunächst in Sandur an, wo die kurdische Gebirgskette beginnt. Es wohnen dort gegen 200 kurdische und etwa 50 jüdische Familien.

Zwei Tagereisen von Sandur liegt in einem fruchtbaren Thale von zahlreichen Quellen umgeben, deren einige Mineralwasser enthalten, die Stadt Deik; es wohnen in ihr 40 jüdische und ungefähr 280 kurdische Familien.

Tanura erreicht man nach einer abermaligen zweitägigen Reise von Deik aus. Die Stadt liegt auf einem hohen Hügel und ist rings von Bergen umschlossen, sie hat eine starke kurdische Bevölkerung und etwa 30 Judenfamilien. In der Nähe findet man zwei ineinandergehende Höhlen, deren erste leer ist und der zweiten als Vorhalle dient. Der Eingangsthür gegenüber fällt von der Mauer ein sehr kostbarer, aus reichen Stoffen gefertigter und mit Goldstickereien verzierter Vorhang herab; in der Mitte der mit Oelmalereien geschmückten Decke hängt ein antiker Kronleuchter, dessen Lichter immerwährend brennen, und neben andern brennenden Lampen und Lichtern an diesem geheimnißvollen Orte ein ahnungsreiches Licht verbreiten, das den Eintretenden unwiderstehlich ergreift. Diese Grotte, über welche wunderbare Sagen verbreitet sind, soll nach dem Volksglauben der Israeliten und Kurden von dem Propheten Elias bewohnt worden sein. Sie gehört nebst den sie umgebenden Feldern der jüdischen Gemeinde, die den Ertrag dieser Aecker dazu verwendet, die Grotte anständig zu erhalten. Sie ist zu diesem Behuf unter die Obhut einer mahomedanischen Familie gestellt, die zum Lohne dafür von Steuern befreit die höchste Achtung genießt und seit undenklichen Zeiten das auch von den Mahomedanern verehrte Heiligthum behütet. Auch die Spenden und Gaben der Pilgrime, die zu verschiedenen Jahreszeiten hierher wallfahrten, dienen dazu, das Innere der Grotte zu erhalten, deren unmittelbarer Bewachung und Einrichtung ein Jude vorsteht. Von Tanura zog ich nach Alkusch, woselbst ich 1848 zwei Tage vor dem Wochenfeste anlangte.

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Alkuſch.

Alkuſch liegt in einer unfruchtbaren Gegend. Die Stadt iſt nur von Armeniern bewohnt, und ſcheint uralt zu ſein; die einzeln ſtehenden Häuſer gleichen befeſtigten Thürmen, die ſich am Fuße der Berge erheben. Mehre Glaubensgenoſſen und Kurden begleiteten mich nach Alkuſch, um hier den Ceremonien beizuwohnen, die man am Grabe des Propheten Nahum verrichtet.[1] Ganz dicht an einem der Berge liegt ein großer Hof, in deſſen Mitte ſich ein geräumiges Haus erhebt, das nur einen Saal enthält, welcher an 1000 Menſchen faſſen kann. Zwei Eingänge führen in dieſes zur Synagoge beſtimmte Gebäude, das jedoch ohne Gemeinde ganz ſonderbar erſcheint. — In dieſem verlaſſenen Tempel befindet ſich auf einem durch ein Geländer abgeſonderten Platze ein Katafalk, welcher mit goldgeſtickten Teppichen bedeckt, mit verſchiedenen Münzen verziert iſt, und über dem ſich ein koſtbarer Baldachin erhebt. Es ſoll das Grab des Propheten Nahum ſein. Die Juden aus Muſſul, Aruel, Erbil, Kirkuk, aus den Gebirgen von Kurdiſtan und aus einer weiteren Entfernung von 8 Tagereiſen in der Runde verſammeln ſich jährlich auf acht Tage vor dem Wochenfeſte zu einer Feſtlichkeit, bei welcher ſie 14 Tage mit religiöſen Uebungen zubringen. Die Armenier beherbergen ſie dieſe Zeit über, treten ihnen ſogar ihre Häuſer ab und wohnen ſo lange in den Vorhöfen und auf den Terraſſen. Ich ſelbſt wohnte als Augenzeuge dieſen Feſtlichkeiten bei und verbürge mich für die Wahrheit meiner Mittheilung.

Die Pilger bringen ihre Geſetzesrollen mit und ſtellen dieſelben in dem heiligen Schrein des Tempels auf, dann begeben ſich die Frauen in das Gemach des Propheten und darauf beginnt die Andacht. Zuerſt wird das Buch Nahum aus einem alten Manuſcripte, welches auf den Katafalk gelegt wird, vorgeleſen und nachdem dies geſchehen, ein ſiebenmaliger feierlicher Rundgang unter Abſingung heiliger Lieder um den heiligen Schrein gemacht. Nach dem ſiebenten Gange ſtimmt man einen Hymnus

[1] Benjamin de Tudela S. 53 verſetzt die Synagoge Nahum's nach Muſſul, ich habe ſie jedoch hier gefunden. Ebenſo berichtet er S. 68, das Grab Nahum's ſei 6 Stunden vom Grabe des Propheten Heſekiel in dem Orte Ein-Schiſta.

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auf den Propheten an, dessen Refrain „Freuet euch des Jubels des Propheten Nahum!“ lautet, und dessen Anfangsbuchstaben bei jedem Verse in alphabetischer Ordnung sich wiederholen. Darauf kommen die Frauen, die nicht hebräisch verstehen, recitiren die für sie ins Arabische oder Kurdische übersetzten Gebete und umtanzen dann singend den Katafalk. Diese Ceremonie wird mit Begeisterung ausgeführt und währt etwa eine Stunde.

Am ersten Abend des Wochenfestes, den 6. Sivan, versammelt man sich in der Synagoge, welche von wohl 1000 Lampen erhellt ist, tritt dann in das Gemach des Propheten, um die oben erwähnte Ceremonie zu wiederholen, und nachdem man wieder in die Synagoge gekommen, beginnt der Gottesdienst. Diejenigen, welche lesen können, beten, die übrigen hören andächtig zu. Diese feierliche Handlung hat nichts besonders Wichtiges; sobald sie beendet, findet in dem Gotteshause eine gegenseitige Bewirthung statt, namentlich ist dabei viel Kaffee gebräuchlich. Bei Tagesanbruch wird das Morgengebet verrichtet, und nun ziehen die Männer, den Pentateuch voraus, mit Flinten, Pistolen und Dolchen bewaffnet zu einem nahe liegenden Gebirge, in Erinnerung der Verkündigung des Gesetzes, welches an diesem Tage vom Berge Sinai verkündet wurde, um dort in der Thora zu lesen und das Musaph-Gebet abzuhalten. In demselben kriegerischen Aufzuge steigt man den Berg wieder herab. Die ganze Versammlung bricht zu Fuß auf und es beginnt eine arabische Phantasie, ein Kriegsspiel. Die malerische Verwirrung, in der die Kämpfer und ihr Kampfgeschrei die Dampfwolken durchdringen, das Waffengeklirr und das ganze nachgeahmte Schlachtgetümmel bieten ein phantastisches Schauspiel dar, das nicht ohne eine gewisse Erhabenheit ist und auf den Zuschauer einen wundersamen Eindruck macht. — Dieses Kriegsspiel soll ein Bild des großen Kampfes sein, den die Juden nach dem dort herrschenden Glauben dereinst bei der Ankunft des Messias gegen die Völker zu bestehen haben, welche sich ihrem Einzuge in das gelobte Land und der Bildung einer unabhängigen, selbstständigen Nation widersetzen werden. — Die in der Stadt zurückgebliebenen Frauen kommen den Männern singend und tanzend unter der einförmigen Begleitung des Tambourins ent-

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gegen und man zieht wieder zurück. — Selbst die Bekenner anderer Religionen nehmen an dem Festesjubel ihrer Gäste Theil, der für sie nebenbei von pecuniärem Vortheil ist.

Ich war Anfangs von dem Getümmel und der Aufregung der tobenden Menge beinahe betäubt und später ganz nachdenkend geworden, als ich sah, bis zu welchem Grade Unwissenheit und Landesgebrauch eine religiöse Feier entstellen können und das Wesentlichste ihrer Principien anzugreifen vermögen.

Manche Einzelheiten dieser Ceremonien sind ohne Zweifel fremder Herkunft und zeugen von arabischen Sitten. Ich glaubte es daher am Orte, einige Worte über diesen Gegenstand an meine Glaubensbrüder zu richten, die den jüdischen Reisenden von Europa große Ehre erweisen und ihren Rath für besonders wichtig ansehen. Man erklärte mir jedoch, daß diese Gebräuche seit alten Zeiten in Ehren bestanden hätten und daß man sie bis zur Ankunft des Messias aufrecht erhalten müsse.

Die Rückkehr zur Synagoge währte fast einen halben Tag, da man unterwegs oftmals anhielt und die Kampfspiele fortsetzte. Endlich in der Synagoge angekommen, stellte man den mitgenommenen Pentateuch wieder in den heiligen Schrein und begann darauf bei dem Katafalk die gewöhnliche Ceremonie des Propheten. Darauf ging alles zur Stadt, um sich von den Anstrengungen des Tages zu erholen. Zur Vesperzeit wurde wiederum in der Synagoge der gewöhnliche Gottesdienst abgehalten, und dann begab man sich zu einem außerhalb der Stadt am Fuße des Berges gelegenen Vergnügungsorte. Dort jubelten und tranken die Männer, während die Frauen zum Tanze gingen, zu dem die Musik von Armeniern ausgeführt wurde. Reichlich flossen dort Spenden der Wohlthätigkeit und Gaben zur Erhaltung und Ausschmückung des Gemaches des Propheten ꝛc. Mit einbrechender Nacht aber eilte Alles wieder zur Synagoge, um das Arwith-Gebet zu verrichten.

Der Glaube an Wunder ist hier fast allgemein und zählt viele Verehrer. Die Pilger führen ihre Kranken hierher, um sie allein in das Gemach des Propheten einzuschließen, und wenn sie die in der Einsamkeit so natürliche Angst überwinden, hält man ihre Genesung für sicher. Für den abergläubischen Kranken hat

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eine solche Nacht voll Angst of die schlimmsten Folgen; denn, wie die Sage geht, soll um Mitternacht in dem Katafalke eine Bewegung entstehen und eine große Gestalt daraus hervorsteigen, die dem Kranken mit dumpfer Grabesstimme zuruft: „Was willst du hier und was ist dein Begehr?“ Wagt es dann der Kranke ohne Furcht zu antworten, so ist er augenblicklich geheilt, im entgegengesetzten Falle jedoch ist er verloren. Jedem Gesunden ist es streng verboten, um Mitternacht an diesem Ort zu verweilen. Ich wünschte mich davon zu überzeugen, was zu diesem Aberglauben Veranlassung gegeben haben könne, und benutzte den Tumult und die Verwirrung des Abends, um mich unter den Teppichen, womit der Katafalk bedeckt ist, zu verbergen, nachdem ich mich mit allem Nöthigen versehen, um dem Schrecken der Einbildungskraft, als auch etwa drohenden wirklichen Gefahren vorzubeugen oder entgegentreten zu können. Sobald ich allein war, trat ich aus meinem Versteck hervor, nahm das dem Propheten Nahum zugeschriebene Manuscript und begann es zu untersuchen. Das Manuscript enthält blos die in der Bibel vorkommende Prophezeiung. Ich fühlte mich sehr unbehaglich und unterbrach auch zuweilen mein Lesen, weil ich ein verdächtiges Geräusch zu hören oder eine Bewegung zu bemerken glaubte, sammelte jedoch bald wieder meinen moralischen Muth und las weiter, bis ich das Ganze beendet hatte. Die Nacht schien mir entsetzlich lang und ich hatte Mühe den mich anwandelnden Schlaf zu bewältigen, weshalb ich in einem Psalmbuche zu lesen begann. Sei es nun, daß das Oel der Lampe mir Kopfschmerzen verursachte, oder die Aberglaubensatmosphäre, in welcher ich seit einem Monat lebte, diese Wirkung auf meine Einbildungskraft ausübte, genug ich fühlte, wie meine Gedanken sich verwirrten und ins Unendliche hinausschweiften. In diesen Augenblicken glaubte ich wirklich das geheimnißvolle Grab in Bewegung und Gespensterbilder vor meinem Geiste vorüberziehen zu sehen, die jedoch allmälig wieder verschwanden. Endlich schlug die Mitternachtsstunde; mein Herz klopfte heftig und mein ganzer Körper bebte, während ein betäubender Schlaf mehr und mehr meine Glieder zu fesseln begann. So lag ich bis zum frühen Morgen, wo mich die Andächtigen, die zur Fortsetzung der Feierlichkeiten

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in den Tempel kamen, erweckten. Man drängte sich neugierig um mich herum und bestürmte mich mit Fragen, was ich gesehen und wie ich die Nacht zugebracht habe; ich antwortete jedoch, daß es mir verboten sei, die Vorfälle der Nacht zu enthüllen und daß nichts mich bewegen könne, das Geheimniß, dessen Kunde mir geworden sei, zu verrathen. Ich glaubte wirklich recht zu handeln, wenn ich diesen Leuten nicht eine ihrer fast einzigen Glaubensstützen raubte; gegen ihre Chachamim aber war ich nicht verschwiegen und erzählte ihnen die ganze Wahrheit. Die Landesbewohner erzählten nachher viel von den Verdiensten, die ich mir bei dem Propheten erworben hätte, da ich die Gefahren überstanden, denen so viele unterlegen wären.

Während der Wallfahrtszeit ist ein jüdischer Wärter mit der Unterhaltung der Synagoge beauftragt, aber die übrige Zeit des Jahres hindurch sind die Schlüssel einer Christenfrau des Ortes anvertraut, die für die ewige Lampe des heiligen Grabes sorgt; sie ist es auch, welche die frommen Reisenden, die am Grabe des Propheten beten wollen, einläßt und begleitet. Der Vorsteher ist Moses Zellem aus Mussul.

Capitel 10.

Zweite Reise in die Gebirge von Kurdistan.

Akra. — Mißhandlung jüdischer Frauen. — Birsani. — Besteigung des Berges Zibari. — Sindu. Meine Krankheit und Genesung. — Klage eines Juden gegen seine Frau. — Disputation und Schlichtung des Streites. — Gefährliche Reise in die Gebirge. — Die Juden daselbst. — Todesdrohung und Flucht. — Rückkehr nach Birsani.

Fünf Tage nach dem Wochenfeste reiste ich zu Pferde mit mehreren andern Pilgern nach Mussul ab, wohin ich nach einer zweitägigen Reise gelangte. Die Landstrecke die ich durchzog, wird in der Bibel an verschiedenen Stellen „Assur" genannt, ein Name,

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der noch heute in allen öffentlichen Acten der Juden, bei Heirathsund Ehescheidungsverträgen ꝛc. gebraucht wird.

Meinem Besuche in Mussul widme ich ein eignes Capitel und will jetzt nur von den östlichen Gegenden Kurdistans sprechen.

Die Reise dorthin ist eine noch bedeutend schwierigere und gefahrvollere, wie die im vorigen Abschnitt geschilderte, und meine Glaubensbrüder widersetzten sich meinem Vorhaben, diese Districte zu besuchen, aufs lebhafteste, so daß ich am Ende heimlich in Begleitung nur eines Kurden mich auf den Weg begab. Die Reise durch diese unwirthbare Wüstengegend, die von zahlreichen Räuberhorden unsicher gemacht wird, währte drei Tage und schon am ersten Tage fand ich, wie gefährlich sie war. Die brennende Sonnenhitze nöthigte mich, einen Theil meiner Kleider abzulegen; plötzlich jedoch sprang mein Wegweiser auf mich zu, umhüllte mich mit meinen Kleidern und befahl mir, mich auf die Erde zu werfen. Der furchtbare Samum, der Wüstenwind, von dem ohne Zweifel die Bibel unter dem Namen Keteph Meriri[1] spricht, zog über uns hin. Man kennt die verheerenden Wirkungen dieses alles versengenden Orkans.

Nach dreitägiger Reise durch die Wüste kam ich von Mussul aus in Akra am Fuße des Chair-Gebirges an, wo etwa hundert Judenfamilien wohnen, deren Vorsteher Elias den alten Titel Nassi führt, welchen in der Regel alle jüdischen Gemeindevorsteher im Orient tragen.

Um die Stadt liegen fruchtbare, tüchtig bebaute Felder; Oel- und Dattelbäume, so wie Weinreben wachsen auf den Abhängen, von denen ein bedeutender Theil der jüdischen Bevölkerung gehört. Mitten in den Feldern, eine halbe Stunde von der Stadt entfernt, steht die durch ihr hohes Alter merkwürdige Synagoge, an welche ein kleines Wasserbassin stößt, das den Frauen zum Bade dient. Früher waren die Frauen dort häufigen Angriffen der Kurden ausgesetzt, wovon mir mehrere Thatsachen mitgetheilt wurden, von denen ich hier einige erzähle.[2] — Eine Jüdin wurde von

[1] Deuteronomion Cap. 32, V. 24. — Psalm 91, V. 6. — Jesaias Cap. 28, V. 2. — Talmud an mehren Orten.

[2] Aehnliches ist auch in Frankreich vorgekommen, wie uns der Sefer Hajaschar von Rab. Tam Fol. 78 mittheilt.

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vier Kurden im Bade überraſcht, ſie hatte jedoch den Muth, ein großes Stück Holz zu ergreifen und es einem der Männer an den Kopf zu ſchleudern, wodurch dieſer todt niedergeſtreckt wurde. Sie entkam jedoch der Schande nur durch den Verluſt ihres eigenen Lebens, denn die drei anderen Kurden ermordeten ſie. — Eine andere Frau wurde von einem Kurden angegriffen, ſetzte ſich zur Wehr und entriß ihm ſeinen Dolch, den ſie ihm in die Hüfte ſtieß. Ein Freund des Verwundeten, der zufällig vorüberging und dieſen im Blute liegen ſah, warf ſich dann über die Frau und erdolchte ſie.

Jeden Nachmittag vor dem Veſpergebete begeben ſich die Juden an den Fluß, der nahe an der Synagoge vorbeifließt, genießen daſelbſt etwas und verrichten alsdann ihr Gebet. Viele unſerer Glaubensbrüder ſind ſehr wohlhabend, ſogar reich, und ihre Lage iſt ſeit der türkiſchen Oberherrſchaft eine erträglichere.

Der Landſtrich ſteht unter den Befehlen des von der türkiſchen Regierung eingeſetzten Paſcha von Muſſul. Alle Bewohner ſprechen kurdiſch, mit Ausnahme des Kaid, welcher türkiſch ſpricht. Die Kurden haben mit ihren alten Sitten und Gebräuchen auch die Unabhängigkeit ihres Charakters bewahrt und das einzige Zeichen ihrer Unterthänigkeit unter die hohe Pforte beſteht in der Leiſtung eines mäßigen Tributs.

Birſani.

Von Akra aus zog ich über das Chair-Gebirge nach Birſani. In das Innere der Gebirge, welche ich durchforſchen wollte, zieht keine Karawane, ich begab mich daher in Begleitung eines Kurden auf den Weg. Die Gegend iſt die ödeſte, traurigſte, die man ſich denken kann, ſie iſt ſo zu ſagen das Herz der Wüſten und Steppen, von den Landesbewohnern ſelbſt wenig gekannt und nur ſelten betreten. Felſige Berge und tiefe Schluchten, in denen zahlreiche Räuberbanden hauſen, durchziehen dieſe Wüſteneien. Nur mit der größten Mühe konnten wir vorwärts ſchreiten und mußten dabei ſtets auf unſerer Hut ſein, da wir keinen

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Augenblick sicher waren. Endlich erreichte ich die alte, auf dem Gipfel eines Berges liegende Stadt Birsani,[1] in welcher gegen 200 Judenfamilien wohnen, deren Nassi Mailum Jacob ist. Ich verweilte nur so lange in der Stadt, als ich gebrauchte, um Notizen über die Gemeinde zu sammeln. Ich bemerkte dabei, daß es nach der dortigen Beobachtung der Religionsgebräuche kein gehöriges Frauenbad gab, wie es die religiösen Gesetze vorschreiben, und machte darüber den Aeltesten der Gemeinde Vorstellungen, wonach man mir versprach, diesem Mangel abzuhelfen. Die Unwissenheit unter unsern Glaubensbrüdern ist hier so groß, daß sie nicht einmal ihr Gebet zu verrichten verstehen, und nirgend fand ich sie, wie ich mit Schmerz gestehen muß, in so rohem Zustande und in so moralische Erniedrigung versunken, wie hier.

In Begleitung eines Glaubensgenossen Namens Jonas, Sohn des Nassi Mailum Jacob von Birsani, und eines kurdischen Wegweisers, welcher der nestorianischen Secte angehörte, verließ ich die Stadt. Wir erstiegen in ungefähr zwölf Stunden den steilen, waldigen Berg Zibari von den Kurden Baris genannt. Als wir den Gipfel erreichten, rief mir der kurdische Führer zu: „Tam Turah!“ (der Berg ist erstiegen), Worte, die aus dem Chaldäischen herstammen, aus welcher Sprache die Kurden, wie ich bei meinen Reisen in die Gebirge bemerkte, viele Ausdrücke in ihre Landessprache hineinmischen, z. B. Malka (der König), Malketa (die Königin) und andere, die sich in Esra finden. Auf dem ganzen öden Wege zu diesem Berge fand ich nur sehr wenige wilde Früchte und Nüsse, dagegen einen sehr guten Salat, der von vielen Landesbewohnern ohne alle Zubereitung genossen wird. Vom Gipfel des Berges aus erquickte sich das Auge an einer weiten Aussicht in tiefe Thäler, zerstreute Dörfer und in fruchtbare lachende Ebenen, in denen sich von Gärten umgeben die Zelte der nomadischen Kurden erheben. Zum Herabsteigen vom Gipfel des Zibari gebrauchten wir sechs Stunden. Unter den Nomaden, die am Fuße des Berges wohnen, traf ich vier jüdische Familien, von denen ich mit herzlicher, fast kindlicher Freude aufgenommen wurde, wobei man mir versicherte, daß dort noch

[1] Die Stadt liegt auf einem Hügel zwischen dem Chair- und Zibari-Gebirge.

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nie ein jüdischer europäischer Reisender gesehen und gehört worden sei. Die Juden der Gegend schmachten unter einem schweren Joche, die Lage der nestorianischen Christen dagegen ist eine etwas erträglichere.

Sindu. — Gebirgsreise.

Nach einem weiteren vierstündigen Marsche durch eine schöne, fruchtbare und wasserreiche Gegend erreichte ich die Stadt Sindu. Die Juden, aus etwa 250 Familien bestehend, deren Nassi Mailum Menasse heißt, bewohnen ein besonderes Stadtviertel. Sindu liegt auf einer Ebene, die rings von einer Gebirgskette umschlossen ist, von welcher eine Menge Ströme herabstürzen. Mühseligkeiten und Entbehrungen aller Art hatten mich dermaßen mitgenommen, daß ich von einem heftigen Fieber ergriffen wurde. — Ohne allen ärztlichen Beistand, der dort ganz unbekannt ist, konnte ich nicht einmal Fleischbrühe bekommen, welche man dort gar nicht kennt, und war lediglich auf meine kräftige Natur angewiesen, welche mir denn auch wieder aufhalf. Als ich mich etwas besser fühlte, führte man mich eines Tages auf mein Verlangen aus der Stadt, um etwas frische Landluft athmen zu können. Nahe meinem Spazierwege bemerkte ich eine Jüdin, die in einem öffentlichen Wasserbehälter Wäsche spülte, und fragte sie, weshalb sie sich zu diesem Geschäfte nicht des klaren Stromwassers bediene, worauf ich zur Antwort erhielt, daß das Wasser in diesem Behälter heiß sei. Nachdem sich die Wäscherin entfernt hatte, warf ich mich sofort zum Erstaunen meiner Wärter in dieses heilsame Bad, durch dessen Gebrauch ich nach mehrtägiger Wiederholung völlig hergestellt wurde. — Ich machte später die Einwohner des Ortes, die von der Heilkraft dieses Wassers keine Ahnung hatten und über meine täglichen Bäder sich wunderten, auf den großen Nutzen dieser warmen Quellen aufmerksam. — Ein anderer Umstand, der zu meiner Genesung viel beitrug, war folgender: Man brachte mir als Purgativmittel die getrockneten Stengel einer dem Geruche nach dem Ysop ähnlichen Pflanze, von welcher ich einen Aufguß bereitete und wodurch ich in wenigen Minuten eine heilsamere Wir-

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kung hatte, als von irgend einer europäiſchen Arznei. Man erzählte mir, daß man ſich als wirkſames Mittel gegen Kopfübel dort wachſender Kräuter bediene, welche man im Waſſer abkochen laſſe, und daß man Blätter einer gewiſſen Staude gegen Uebelkeiten benutze. Ich hatte in meinen mir geraubten Notizen die Namen dieſer Pflanzen angemerkt, habe jedoch auf meinen Fußreiſen keine derſelben finden können.

Um meine Geneſung zu feiern, wurde von den Gemeindemitgliedern eine Feſtlichkeit veranſtaltet. Ich blieb dann noch einige Tage in der Stadt und hatte Gelegenheit, einen eigenthümlichen Fall zu ſchlichten, den ich als Beweis dafür, wie ſehr es mit der Ausübung religiöſer Vorſchriften unter dieſen Völkerſchaften im Argen liegt, mittheile.

Als Chacham von Jeruſalem[1] wurde ich von einem Manne um Rath gebeten, der ſeine Frau beſchuldigte, daß ſie ihm die Beweiſe ehelicher Zuneigung verſage. Bei meiner näheren Erkundigung nach der Sache begann die junge Frau eine ſo weitſchweifige Ausrede, daß es mir unmöglich war, die Sachlage zu verſtehen, ich bemerkte jedoch aus ihrer Antwort, daß ihre Ehe gegen die religiöſen Vorſchriften verſtieß und begann deshalb ein ſpecielles Verhör. Ich fragte die Frau, ob ſie bei ihrer Verheirathung Jungfrau, Wittwe oder Geſchiedene geweſen ſei, worauf ſie mir die Erklärung gab, ſie ſei weder das eine noch das andere, ſondern noch verheirathet geweſen; ihr Mann aber ſei zum Mahomedanismus übergetreten und deshalb habe ſie einen Andern heirathen dürfen. — Ich wandte mich darauf an den klägeriſchen Ehemann und fragte ihn, wie er es gegen alle Vorſchriften und Geſetze der Religion habe wagen können, eine noch in ehelichen Banden befindliche Frau zu heirathen, worauf mir dieſer erklärte: ſein Vater, der Mailum der Gemeinde, habe die Erlaubniß dazu ertheilt.

Ich ließ nunmehr den Mailum rufen und hielt mit ihm eine zweitägige Disputation, in welcher ich die Autorität aller auf die Sache bezüglichen moſaiſchen Verordnungen citirte und zu beweiſen ſuchte, daß vor der neuen Verheirathung eine wirkliche Scheidung von dem früheren Gatten nöthig geweſen ſei. Der Mailum ſeiner-

[1] Ich wurde in der ganzen Gegend ſo genannt, weil ich von Jeruſalem kam.

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seits machte dagegen die örtlichen Gebräuche geltend und behauptete, daß die Frau durch die Verlassung Seitens des ersten Mannes ihrer Treue und ihres Schwures entbunden, daß dadurch der Heirathsvertrag gänzlich aufgelöst sei, und das durch Kidduschin (Aufstecken des Trauringes) geschlossene Bündniß in Nichts zerfalle, da es überhaupt mit einem Nicht-Israeliten ohne allen Werth wäre. — Ich erklärte jedoch, daß dies nur dann richtig sei, wenn der Mann nicht ursprünglich Israelit gewesen. Meine Beweisgründe und Citate brachten es dahin, daß die anwesenden Mailum Menasse und Isaak mir beipflichteten und da nun der Mailum der Gemeinde allein gegen die Ansicht Aller dastand, so versprach er, den ersten Gatten zur Scheidung zu veranlassen, was denn auch durch Zahlung einer gewissen Geldsumme erreicht wurde. Ich ermahnte darauf die junge Frau, daß sie nunmehr nach der Scheidung vom ersten Gatten und meiner Ungültigkeitserklärung der zweiten Ehe nur mit einem Dritten sich verheirathen könne, und verließ Alle in großer Befriedigung.

Mein geschwächter Körper gestattete mir nicht, noch weiter in die Gebirge vorzudringen und ich kehrte deshalb nach Birsani zurück, um zu sehen, ob das versprochene Frauenbad angelegt sei. Die Gemeinde wurde versammelt, das Bad war bald errichtet und wurde festlich eingeweiht, worauf ich dann noch mehre Verbesserungen im Kultus und Ritus, die beide unseren Sitten und Vorschriften nicht angemessen waren, einführte.

Am Schlusse eines Festmahles, welches man mir zu Ehren veranstaltete, redete mich der Aelteste mit folgenden Worten an: „Chacham! du bist unser Lehrer, du bist wie eine Krone auf unserm Haupte. Der Herr hat dich zu uns gesandt, um uns vor Sünden zu bewahren und durch deine Weisheit ist uns die Wahrheit kund geworden. Der Glaube an deine hohe Sendung ist um so viel stärker bei uns, da du alle dir dargebotenen Geschenke ausgeschlagen hast. Um eine Gunst jedoch wollen wir dich bitten, die du uns nicht versagen darfst."

Ich erwiederte darauf, daß ich, wenn es nur von mir abhinge, dies versprechen wolle; worauf dann der Aelteste fortfuhr: „Wohlan denn, in der Nähe von Urmia, in den Gebirgen an der Grenze Kleinpersiens, wohnen zahlreiche Glaubensbrüder, die

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unwissend wie wir, unseren Wunsch nach Belehrung theilen, um auf dem Pfade des Guten vorzuschreiten. Sie sind von deiner Anwesenheit in Kenntniß gesetzt und harren ungeduldig auf dich. Wir bitten dich, täusche nicht ihre Hoffnungen; gehe hin, um sie aufzusuchen, und du wirst ein dem Ewigen wohlgefälliges Werk verrichten, da es den unglücklichen Kindern Israels zum Wohl gereichen wird."

Ich versprach es, diese Reise zu unternehmen und bat um ein Geleit, worauf zwölf der angesehensten Männer, unter ihnen der Nassi selbst, es sich als eine Gunst erbaten, mich begleiten zu dürfen. Es wurden darauf vier Fremde, Abgesandte der Gemeinden, die ich besuchen sollte, hereingeführt, die mich mit Freudenthränen begrüßten und mich baten, ihnen doch sogleich zu folgen. Als ich mich dazu bereit erklärte, kehrten sie gegen Mitternacht zu den Ihrigen zurück, um dort meine Ankunft anzuzeigen und mir ein bewaffnetes Geleit entgegen zu senden.

In der ersten Hälfte des Juli 1848 brach ich auf, begleitet von mehren Juden und einigen Kurden, die uns Maulthiere vermiethet hatten. Die Beschwerden und Gefahren des Weges sind unbeschreiblich. Zwei Tage hindurch vermochten wir nur einzeln durch einen Engpaß vorzudringen, in welchen kein Sonnenstrahl hinab schien, wobei die Dornen unsere Kleider zerrissen und unsre Füße zerfleischten. Kaum aber hatten wir diesen schwierigen Paß verlassen, so wurden wir von etwa 50 Kurden angegriffen, mit denen wir einen ernsten Kampf bestanden. Nach langem und festem Widerstande flüchteten sich die Angreifer unter Mitnahme ihrer Verwundeten.

Am dritten Tage kamen wir zu einem Flusse, der am Fuße eines Berges dahinrauschte. Dort wollten wir ausruhen, als wir acht jüdische Männer gewahrten, die uns als Abgesandte entgegen kamen; ihr Nassi, Mailum Jehuda, befand sich unter ihnen. Man lud mich auf die Schultern und so erreichten wir den Gipfel des Berges, wo man mich in der Nähe eines kurdistanischen Dorfes niedersetzte. Es wohnen dort vier Judenfamilien, zu deren Mailum Benjamin man mich führte. Gegen Abend kamen sechs neue Abgesandte unter Anführung des Mailum Asunah, und am nächsten Morgen langten Deputirte aus mehreren andern Dörfern

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an. Bei meinen Nachfragen über den Gottesdienst fand ich, daß manche ihrer Gebräuche nicht mit den gesetzlichen Verordnungen übereinstimmten, und deutete dies den Aeltesten an, von denen ich das Versprechen erhielt, meinen in dieser Beziehung gemachten Anordnungen und Verbesserungen Folge leisten zu wollen.

Kurz nach meiner Ankunft ereignete sich indeß ein Vorfall, der einen Begriff von den Zuständen in diesen Ländern giebt und der mich zwang, sofort meine Rückreise anzutreten.

Es hatte sich nämlich im Dorfe ein Mann den Titel Mailum angemaßt und fungirte ohne alle Befähigung und Befugniß als Schächter. Er wurde auf meine Veranlassung seines Amtes entsetzt. Er hatte aber dieses Amt gegen Zahlung einer jährlichen Abgabe vom kurdischen Oberhaupte gekauft und dieser sah sich nun in seinen Interessen benachtheiligt. Der Kurde kam denn auch selbst zu mir und fragte, wer ich sei, und welches Recht ich hätte, einen von ihm angestellten Beamten zu entlassen. Meine Begleiter erklärten ihm, ich sei ein Chacham von Bet-el-Mikdasch, ausgesandt um über die richtige Handhabung der Glaubensgesetze unter den Juden zu wachen. Ich selbst machte ihn darauf aufmerksam, daß ein Marabut, der es wagen würde, sich diesen Titel und dessen Functionen bei den Mahomedanern anzumaßen, gewiß sofort seines Amtes entsetzt werden würde. Der Kurde wußte darauf nichts anderes zu entgegnen, als den Ausruf: „Das ist wahr, aber du hast mir Abbruch an meinen Einkünften gethan, und du wirst mit deinem Kopfe dafür büßen.“ Dann ging er wüthend hinaus.

Meine Begleiter und Glaubensgenossen, welche diese Drohung mit angehört hatten, wurden sehr betrübt, denn sie wußten, daß derartige Drohungen niemals ohne Erfolg ausgesprochen wurden. Wir wurden gleich darauf durch einige Juden benachrichtigt, daß mehre bewaffnete Männer uns einen Hinterhalt gelegt hatten, um ihrem Herrn meinen Kopf zu liefern. Ich überdachte den ganzen Abend unsere schwierige Lage und auf welche Weise wir uns der drohenden Gefahr entziehen könnten. Endlich kam ich auf folgenden Einfall. „Bleibet zusammen,“ sagte ich zu meinen Glaubensbrüdern, „singet und machet Geräusch, bringet aber kein Licht herein. Die Kurden werden keinen Verdacht schöpfen, und meine

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Begleiter werden mit mir entfliehen." — Mein Vorschlag wurde gebilligt, nur sollten wir nicht alle zusammen, sondern zu zwei und drei fortgehen, und uns an einem bestimmten Orte wieder sammeln.

Unsere Flucht gelang glücklich, da wir einen anderen Weg durch die Wüste und die großen Waldgebirge einschlugen. Welches Verhängniß aber die Zurückgebliebenen betroffen, ob ihr froher Gesang sich in Klagelieder verwandelt hat, daran wage ich nicht zu denken.

Meine Flucht war bald bekannt geworden und nach allen Richtungen wurden Bewaffnete hinter uns her gesandt, von denen mehre uns begegneten, ihrer geringen Zahl wegen aber zu schwach waren, uns an unserm Rückzuge nach Birsani zu hindern, wo wir nach drei Tagen glücklich, wenn auch erschöpft anlangten.

Zu den beiden Ausflügen in die kurdistanischen Gebirge hatte ich 55 Tage gebraucht und kehrte dann nach Mussul auf einem andern Wege zurück.

Capitel 11.

Mussul.

Die Ruinen von Ninive. — Grab des Propheten Jonas. — Erbil (Arbel). — Unterdrückung der Juden. — Erzählung einiger Thatsachen.

Die Stadt Mussul liegt in der Nähe der im Alterthum hochberühmten Stadt Ninive. Aufs neue befand ich mich während meiner Pilgerfahrten unter den Schatten der Vergangenheit. Große Völker und mächtige Könige haben hier gehaust; Städte, deren ungeheure Trümmer unsere Bewunderung erregen, trotzen nach Jahrhunderte langem Verfall noch immer in ihren Ruinen der Zeit. Meine Phantasie ließ unter diesen großartigen Trümmermassen die längst erloschenen Geschlechter auferstehen und schöpfte aus diesem erhabenen Grabe des ehrwürdigen Alterthums Bilder voll Kraft und Leben.

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Heute noch kann man die große Ausdehnung sowie theilweise auch die ursprüngliche Lage der alten berühmten untergegangenen Stadt erkennen, deren Reste längs der Ufer des Tigris die Landschaft in einer Weite von 8 Stunden bis in die Nähe von Mussul bedecken. Ueberall wohin der Fuß tritt, findet man eingefallene und zertrümmerte Paläste und Bauwerke aus colossalen Felsenstücken von ungewöhnlicher Höhe, die von Riesenhänden aufgethürmt zu sein scheinen; Höhlen von merkwürdiger Gestalt und in Felsen gehauene Wohnungen, die der Sage nach zu Vorrathskammern gedient haben. An den beiden Ufern des Tigris stehen zwei großartige Säulengänge aus ungeheueren Steinen einander gegenüber, welche man für die Thore des alten Ninive hält. Antike Vasen, theils mit unleserlichen Inschriften, die man 3 Stunden von Mussul in verschiedener Form und Größe findet, deuten auf einen Ursprung, der bis zum babylonischen Thurmbau, wenigstens bis zur Zeit König Sanherib's hinaufreicht.

Den Mittelpunkt des alten Ninive soll ein Dorf bilden, das eine halbe Stunde von Mussul liegt. Man zeigt in diesem Dorfe ein Grab, welches die Volkssage für das des Propheten Jonas ausgiebt,[1] der zur Bekehrung der lasterhaften Stadt ausgesandt war. Das Grab liegt auf einem Hofe, auf welchem nach der Behauptung der Mahomedaner der berühmte Kikajon (Kürbis) alljährlich von Neuem wächst, dessen Blätter dem Propheten einst Schatten gaben.[2] Die Araber verehren dieses Grab mit vieler Andacht und beten namentlich dort für die Genesung ihrer Kranken. Die Erde, welche das Grab bedeckt, wird für heilig gehalten und in kleine Beutel gefüllt als besonders kräftiger Talisman um den Hals gehängt. Den Christen sowohl wie den Juden ist der Besuch des Grabes verboten.

In der Stadt Mussul wohnen beinahe 450 Judenfamilien,[3] die sich in keiner Weise über ihre Lage zu beklagen haben; mehre

[1] Benjamin de Tudela S. 44 sagt, daß das Grab des Propheten Jonas in Palästina auf dem Berge Zipore bei der Stadt liege.

[2] Jonas Cap. 4, V. 6.

[3] Benjamin de Tudela S. 52 spricht von 7000 Juden. — Pethachia S. 171 giebt 6000 Juden an. — Ritter's Erdkunde Thl. 11, S. 211 zählt nach Niebuhr 150 Judenhäuser.

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unter ihnen treiben sehr ausgebreitete Handelsgeschäfte. Die Synagoge ist groß, enthält jedoch nichts Merkwürdiges, außer daß sich hinter dem heiligen Schrein eine Höhle befindet, die von dem Propheten Elias bewohnt gewesen sein soll.[1] Drei Chachamim verwalten das Richter- und Civilamt, nämlich der älteste Chacham Rachamim, der zweite Chacham Sason, und der dritte Chacham David, alle drei aus der Familie Birsani, welche aus jener Stadt zu stammen scheint. Die Unwissenheit und der Aberglaube der Bevölkerung sind außerordentlich, doch besitzen sie eine Schule, worin die Kinder Religionsunterricht erhalten, deren Lehrer Mardechai ein Sohn des Chacham David, ein Verwandter des Geldwechslers Isaak Zellem ist, bei dem ich logirte.

Die Industrie ist blühend; die leichten durchsichtigen Gewebe, die wie von Feenhand gemacht sind, die berühmten Musseline, tragen ihren Namen von dieser Stadt. Von dorther sind sie zuerst nach Europa ausgeführt und in einer Vollkommenheit angefertigt, die ihren Preis erhöht.

Mussul gleicht allen andern arabischen Städten; die Häuser haben nur ein Stockwerk, sind mit einer Terrasse versehen und nach der Straße zu ohne Fenster. Die Stadt ist auf zwei Seiten von Bergen geschützt, während an der dritten Seite der Tigris vorbeiströmt und die vierte an die Küste stößt. Zahlreiche Mineralquellen, die einen starken Schwefelgeruch verbreiten, sprudeln in der Umgegend. Der Hitze des Klimas wegen hält man sich bei Tage in gewölbten im Hofe befindlichen unterirdischen Gemächern auf, auch würde aus demselben Grunde das Wasser nicht zu gebrauchen sein, wenn man es nicht in Cisternen sammelte oder in einer Art bläulich weißer irdener Geschirre aufbewahrte, welche es kühl und frisch erhalten. Das Innere der Häuser ist eigenthümlich; die Zimmer sind lang und schmal, einige auf dicken Teppichen liegende Kissen schmücken den Boden; man schläft auf Matratzen. — Die Bevölkerung besteht aus Türken, Juden und Armeniern; nächst der türkischen ist die arabische Sprache am meisten verbreitet. Türken und Juden tragen gleichmäßige Klei-

[1] Benjamin de Tudela S. 52 spricht von drei Synagogen, nämlich die vom Propheten Obadja, vom Propheten Jonas und vom Propheten Elias.

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dung, einen rothen Fez oder einen buntfarbigen Turban; die Frauen einen orientalischen Kopfputz, der mit Gold und Perlen verziert ist. Ein langes Oberkleid bedeckt den Leib und eine Art Pantoffeln die Füße; die Hände und Beine sind mit Gold- und Silberringen geschmückt; auch haben fast alle Frauen sowie manche Männer Ringe in den Ohren und durch die Nase. Beim Ausgehen werfen die Frauen einen Schleier über den Kopf.

Es residiren in Mussul die Consuln von England und Frankreich, von denen der Letztere während meiner Anwesenheit einen besonderen Einfluß auf die Behörden ausübte; ich hatte mich unter seinen Schutz gestellt und gestehe dankbar, daß seine Fürsorge für mich alles Lob verdient.

Nach einem monatlichen Aufenthalte zu Mussul reiste ich mit einer Karawane nach Erbil ab[1], welches die Juden für das Ressen der Bibel halten.[2] Auf der Hälfte des Weges fließt der Strom El Kebir, der die Grenze zwischen den Paschaliks Mussul und Bagdad bildet; er ist ein mächtiger rauschender Strom, der sich in den Tigris ergießt. Das Wasser wimmelt von einer Unzahl röthlicher Fische, deren Fleisch eine köstliche Speise geben soll, und von denen einzelne ein Gewicht von 200 Pfund erreichen.

Erbil ist in zwei Theile getheilt, von denen der eine die auf dem Berge gelegene feste Stadt, der andere in der weiten Ebene der Sitz des Handels und der Industrie ist. Es wohnen dort 150 Judenfamilien, deren Nassi Mailum Mardechai ist; sie werden jedoch von der fanatischen, rohen und halb verwilderten Secte des Ali sehr bedrückt, wovon ich einige Beispiele mittheile.

Einige Zeit vor meiner Ankunft goß ein jüdisches Mädchen Spülwasser in die Straße und bespritzte damit zufällig einen vorübergehenden Muselmann. Es sammelte sich sofort ein Haufen Volks vor dem Hause, erbrach die Thür, bemächtigte sich des Mädchens, überhäufte es mit Schimpfworten und Drohungen

[1] Benjamin de Tudela S. 52 sagt, daß Erbil 1 Meile von Mussul sei; ich weiß aber nicht, welchen Weg der Reisende gegangen ist, da die geringste Entfernung zwei Tagereisen ist.

[2] 1. B. Moses Cap. 10, V. 12. — Nach Benjamin de Tudela S. 64 liegt diese Stadt in der Nähe von Bagdad, zwei Tagereisen davon entfernt.

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und fragte, wie es, die Tochter eines verfluchten Geschlechts, sich erfrechen könne, einen Rechtgläubigen zu beleidigen. Das Mädchen vertheidigte sich nach Möglichkeit, doch der Führer der Tumultuanten rief ihm zu: „Es giebt nur ein Mittel zu deiner Rettung; gehe zu unserm Glauben über, du wirst einen der Unsrigen heirathen, der jung, schön, reich und von guter Familie ist.“ Das Mädchen aber weigerte sich und entgegnete: „Ich bin eine Jüdin, so geboren und als solche will ich sterben, nimmermehr werde ich meinen Gott, mein Volk und meinen Glauben verleugnen; tödtet ihr mich, so wird Gott mein Blut von euch fordern und der Herr wird mich rächen.“ — Man ergriff sie darauf, tödtete sie unter den Augen ihrer Eltern mit Messerstichen und zerriß sie in Stücke. Die Gemeinde wollte Anfangs beim Pascha von Bagdad und nachher in Konstantinopel Klage erheben, wurde jedoch aus Furcht vor anderen Verfolgungen und allgemeinem Morde davon abgehalten.

In demselben Jahre war Rabbi Peracchia, ein Abgesandter der portugiesischen Juden zu Jerusalem, der beauftragt war, die brüderlichen Spenden für die armen Juden von Jerusalem in Empfang zu nehmen, zu Erbil gestorben und mit allen seinem heiligen Amte gebührenden Ehren begraben worden. In der Nacht nach dem Begräbniß rissen die Muselmänner den Leichnam aus dem Grabe heraus, hieben ihm eine Hand ab und warfen die Ueberreste in einen offenen Graben, ohne sie zu bedecken. Die Juden begaben sich auf den Begräbnißplatz und verschütteten die offen stehende Gruft: doch war dies Alles, was sie zu thun wagten. Die Alltäglichkeit solcher Unterdrückung hat sie dermaßen gebeugt und die Furcht vor noch größerem Unglück ist so groß, daß sie sich ohne Murren in Alles ergeben. Es waren aber zur Zeit dieses Vorfalles mehre Juden aus Bagdad in Erbil anwesend und benachrichtigten die europäischen Consuln von der Sache; denn der Rabbi, dessen Grab man entweiht hatte, war österreichischer Unterthan. Dadurch kam die Schandthat zu den Ohren des Pascha, der die Missethäter vor sich kommen ließ und sie mit den Worten anredete: „Wisset ihr nicht, daß die Gräber Gefängnisse sind, in denen Gott die Menschen bis zum Tage des Gerichts aufbewahrt? Warum ehret ihr seine Orte nicht?“ — Es

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wurden darauf gerichtliche Untersuchungen angestellt, und die Grabschänder hätten ihre verdiente Strafe erhalten, wenn nicht die Juden von Erbil gezwungen gewesen wären, um Gnade für sie zu bitten, die ihnen dann bewilligt wurde.

Ein anderer Beweis von religiöser Intoleranz erregt besonderes Erstaunen, weil die Unduldsamkeit der Muselmänner sonst nicht die Schwelle des Gotteshauses überschreitet. Da die Synagoge auf dem Berge zu entfernt war, so hatten die Juden des untern Stadttheils eine neue errichtet und wollten dem Gebrauch gemäß die Gesetzesrollen feierlich dorthin tragen. Auf dem Wege aber wurden sie von Muselmännern überfallen, mehre von ihnen getödtet, andere verwundet, und der neue Tempel niedergerissen. Es wurde seitdem ein zweiter Tempel errichtet; bei der feierlichen Uebertragung des Pentateuchs wiederholten sich jedoch dieselben Auftritte.

Ich selbst war Zeuge der letzteren Scene und kann mit Recht die Lage unserer Glaubensbrüder in Erbil eine unerträgliche nennen. Einen schwachen Ersatz finden sie in der unbeschränkten Handelsfreiheit, denn darin sind sie vollkommen frei und unbehindert. Alle aber sind sie in tiefe Unwissenheit versunken; der Schochet ist der Beamte der Gemeinde.

Kleidung, Sitten und Sprache der Bewohner von Erbil sind wie in Mussul; die Juden sprechen arabisch.

Nach mehren Tagen der Ruhe faßte ich den Entschluß, den nordwestlichen Theil der Gebirge von Kurdistan gegen Persien zu durchforschen und eine Anzahl jüdischer und kurdischer Völkerschaften zu besuchen, die noch niemals von einem jüdischen Reisenden aus Europa besucht wurden. Es kommen dorthin zwar zuweilen Chachamim von Jerusalem, aber der größere Theil dieser Pilgrime fällt als Opfer seines Muthes und seiner Hingebung.

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Capitel 12.

Dritte Reise in die Gebirge von Kurdistan.

Uebergang über das Pirmam-Gebirge. — Rowandis. — Gedrückte Lage der Juden daselbst. Sonderbarer Gebrauch. — Choi-Sandjack.

Zum dritten Male wagte ich mich in diese wilden gefahrvollen Gebirge, in dieses Urland, in welchem der Name Europa kaum bekannt ist und in welches nur ein unerschrockener, an Gefahren, Mühsal und Entbehrungen aller Art gewöhnter Reisender, der sich ganz seinem Zwecke hingiebt, vorzudringen wagt. Jene Gegenden sind bis jetzt unerforscht, doch in so vieler Hinsicht der Untersuchung werth.

Ich überschritt von Erbil aus in Begleitung eines kurdischen Führers in drittehalb Tagen das nördlich von dieser Stadt liegende Pirmam-Gebirge, eine Wüstengegend, voll Schluchten und Hohlwege, die von Räubern bewohnt sind. Glücklich überwand ich alle Hindernisse unangefochten und gelangte zu der Stadt Rowandis.

Sie liegt auf einem sehr hohen Berge, an dessen Fuße der schäumende Strom Rowandis vorüberrauscht. Seit Kurzem unter die Herrschaft der türkischen Obrigkeit gelangt, hat sich die Lage der Juden in der Stadt, wo sie seit Jahrhunderten nur Schmach und Elend erduldeten, um etwas gebessert. Ihre Kleidung ist anständiger, ihre Wohnungen besser gebaut und namentlich ordentlicher gehalten als in den übrigen Gebirgstheilen. Früher hatten die Juden nicht nur die ganze Tyrannei der Kurden zu ertragen, sondern sie wurden sogar wie Schlachtvieh verkauft und in ihrem Heiligsten, ihrem Glauben angegriffen. So drangen z. B. die Kurden, als am Neujahrstage der Schofar (das Horn, auf welchem nach mosaischem Gesetze am jüdischen Neujahrstage geblasen wird), in der Synagoge ertönte, in den Tempel ein, fielen über die Frauen her, mißhandelten sie, zerbrachen die sym-

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bolische Trompete und zwangen die Juden, von der Ceremonie abzustehen. Die türkischen Behörden haben solchem Unwesen Einhalt gethan; in den entfernteren Dörfern aber, wo die Ueberwachung schwieriger wird, dulden die Juden noch alle Art von Muthwillen, werden jedoch nicht wie Sklaven verkauft. In vielen Städten, auch in Rowandis, das, wie bereits gesagt, unter türkischer Herrschaft steht, findet man noch Ueberreste des alten Druckes, den Frohndienst, in einzelnen Fällen sogar mit Vorwissen der Mutesellim (Bürgermeister), ohne daß jedoch der in Bagdad wohnende Pascha etwas davon weiß. Die türkischen Häuptlinge zwingen Männer und Frauen, Steine zu behauen, Kalk zu brennen, Ziegel zu streichen u. s. w. und alles dies zum Ruhme des Herrn. Unsere armen Glaubensbrüder denken, es sei ihre Bestimmung zu leiden und ergeben sich geduldig in ihr Schicksal, dessen geringste Milderung sie für ein unverhofftes Glück halten. Einige von ihnen erfreuen sich einer gewissen Wohlhabenheit, und namentlich der Nassi des Ortes, Mailum Nissim, ist reich an Ländereien und Heerden, hat dabei zwei Frauen und mehre Kinder. Die jüdische Bevölkerung im allgemeinen ist sehr unwissend und besitzt keinen Rabbi; zwar führt der Schwiegersohn des Nassi, der Schochet Mailum Samuel, den Titel Rabbi, versteht aber höchstens, dem Gottesdienste in der Synagoge vorzustehen. Nur der Rabbi betet laut, und daher kommt es, daß das Gebet Schemone Esra, welches bekanntlich jedes Gemeindemitglied zuerst leise für sich betet und dann der Rabbi laut wiederholt, dort nur einmal vom Vorbeter gesprochen wird.

Ein anderer sonderlicher Gebrauch ist der, daß sie sich am Neujahrstage nach der Ceremonie des Taschlich (Gebet am Wasser) an den am Fuße des Berges fließenden Strom begeben, dort das Gebet verrichten, und sich dann ins Wasser werfen und darin herumschwimmen. Sie behaupten durch dieses Bad von allen Sünden rein zu werden, und vergessen ganz der neuen Sünde, welche sie mit dem Bade selbst begehen, da eine solche Handlung an Feiertagen verboten ist.[1] Ich machte einige Vorstellungen

[1] Messechet Sabat S. 1. — Mischna 1. — Hallochot Sabat im Schulchan Aruch 1. Th. Art. 339, B. 2. — Hallochot Jomtow Art. 524, B. 1.

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darüber und man versprach mir auch eine Verbesserung in dieser Hinsicht.

Rowandis ist ein Ackerbau treibender Ort, Getreide und Vieh sind seine Handelsgegenstände.

Nach einem zweitägigen schwierigen Marsche kam ich nach Choi-Sandjack, östlich von Rowandis. Die jüdische Bevölkerung dort besteht aus etwa 70 Familien, welche in einer weniger gedrückten Lage leben, als die in Rowandis. Sie treiben theils Ackerbau, theils Handel. Der Ort selbst ist im Allgemeinen industrieller als der vorige.

Damit enden meine Reisen in Kurdistan. Ich hatte bei meinen drei Ausflügen in diese wilden und unwirthbaren Gegenden so oft und so mannigfaltigen Gefahren die Stirn geboten, daß ich das Unmögliche nicht versuchen wollte.

Capitel 13.

I. Abstammung der kurdischen Juden. Die Nestorianer. — II. Frohndienst und Abgaben. — III. Sklaverei. — IV. Das Herrenrecht. — V. Zustand der Unwissenheit in religiöser Beziehung. — VI. Industrie und Arbeiten. — VII. Biblische Vorschriften, welche die Juden und andere orientalische Völker befolgen. — VIII. Uebersicht in religiöser und moralischer Beziehung. Notizen über die Gebräuche gegen das mosaische Gesetz.

Beim Beginn dieses Capitels fühle ich die ganze Wichtigkeit der Aufgabe, die ich mir gestellt habe. Die Wahrheit, die ich um den Preis so vieler Opfer gesucht habe, scheint mir endlich schimmern zu wollen und das Dunkel, das seit so langer Zeit über der Vergangenheit der verlorenen zehn Stämme Israels sich gelagert hat, beginnt sich zu erhellen. — Doch von neuem erheben sich fast unüberwindliche Schwierigkeiten vor mir, da es gänzlich an allen geschichtlichen Monumenten und Urkunden fehlt, die einen sicheren Anhaltspunkt bieten könnten, und deren ich bis

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heute noch keines zu entdecken vermochte. Bei dem Mangel solcher Beweise habe ich meine eigenen Forschungen und Beobachtungen zusammengefaßt, und bin dadurch zu einigen gewissenhaften Schlußfolgerungen gekommen, die für mich den ganzen Werth glaubwürdiger Thatsachen gewonnen haben. — Ich hoffe dieselben nach meiner zweiten Reise, die ich mit Gottes Hülfe demnächst unternehmen werde, durch genaue Nachforschungen vollständiger und klarer geben zu können.

I.

Wenn man den Traditionen der Juden und Nestorianer Glauben schenkt, so hat ihre Ansiedelung in diesen Ländern vor der Zerstörung des ersten Tempels stattgefunden.[1] Dieselben Sagen sind überall bewahrt und sie berichten, daß die Ahnen unserer Brüder, in diese Länder vertrieben, dort nach der assyrischen Gefangenschaft blieben und nicht wieder nach Palästina zurückkehrten. Es folgt daraus, daß sie gerade von den Ueberbleibseln der zehn Stämme des Königreichs Israel abstammen, die aus ihrem Vaterlande durch die assyrischen Könige hierher verpflanzt wurden. Wir finden einen Beleg dafür in der Geschichte der Könige, wo uns mitgetheilt wird, daß zur Zeit des Königs Peckach von Israel der assyrische König Tiglat Pilesser sich eines Theiles des Königreichs Israel bemächtigte und die Einwohner desselben nach Assyrien führte.[2] Mehr als wahrscheinlich ist es, daß Kurdistan, ein an Assyrien grenzendes Land, einen Theil des großen assyrischen Reiches bildete, denn noch heute gehört es zum Paschalik Mussul, dessen gleichnamige Hauptstadt dicht an das alte Ninive, die Hauptstadt Assur's stößt. Der Autorität der Bibel schließen sich die Zeugnisse neuerer Schriftsteller und die seit Jahrhunderten bestehenden übereinstimmenden Traditionen an. Ich sehe darum keinen Zweifel mehr, ja ich

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[1] Benjamin de Tudela S. 77 sagt dasselbe. — Das Buch Derech Emeth Fol. 15, S. 1 erklärt das Wort Touri Kardu mit „finstere Gebirge"; von daher mag auch die Sage der Juden stammen, daß die vertriebenen zehn Stämme in den finsteren Gebirgen wohnen.

[2] 2. B. der Könige Cap. 15, V. 29.

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hege die feste Ueberzeugung, daß Ueberreste der zehn Stämme in Kurdistan wohnen. Andere wohlbekannte Reisende berichten ziemlich identisch über denselben Gegenstand, so bestätigte noch vor wenigen Jahren Mr. Grant, ein amerikanischer Missionär, der diese Gegenden durchforschte, daß die Christen der nestorianischen Secte in Kurdistan wohnen, und fügt dann hinzu, daß diese Nestorianer die geraden Nachkommen der vertriebenen zehn Stämme Israels seien, die erst in späteren Jahrhunderten den christlichen Glauben angenommen hätten. Ich stütze meine Behauptungen auf folgende Gründe:

1) Viele Nestorianer geben selbst an, daß sie von den gefangenen Juden abstammen, ohne jedoch weder die Zeitepoche noch den Stamm angeben zu können, da es an geschriebenen Documenten fehlt, sie selbst aber zu unwissend sind, um sich auf andere Beweise als ihre Traditionen stützen zu können.

2) Die Nestorianer der Orte, welche ich besucht habe, leben meist mit den Juden in freundschaftlichen Beziehungen, während sie mit den nomadischen Kurden keinen Umgang haben.

3) Sie werden von den Kurden in derselben Weise wie die Juden unterdrückt, was eine Folge der langen Gefangenschaft zu sein scheint, ein Schicksal, das alle vertriebenen, in Sklaverei geführten Völker mit einander gemein haben. Die Nestorianer vereinigen sich zur Abhaltung ihres Gottesdienstes in der Art, wie dies von unsern Brüdern geschieht. Sie haben dabei kein Symbol, kein Kreuz, keine Glocken, und ihre Grundsätze sind in dieser Beziehung oft denen der Juden ähnlich. Sie feiern den Sabbath. Es steht geschichtlich fest, daß die zehn Stämme wenige Gelehrte hatten, daß sie sich leicht dem fremden Kultus ergaben und fremde Sitten und Gebräuche annahmen, wie man denn auch wohl zu dem Glauben berechtigt ist, daß diese unglücklichen Verbannten, in unbekannte Länder verpflanzt und in völlig neuen und fremdartigen Umgebungen sich bewegend, mit oder ohne ihren Willen denjenigen nachahmten, welche ihre Herren geworden waren, und so deren Gebräuche, Sitten und Gewohnheiten sich aneigneten, zumal sie als Sklaven gehorchen mußten. So ist es möglich, daß die Juden sich bis zu einem gewissen Grade mit den Urvölkern Kurdistans verschmolzen haben und verschmelzen konnten. —

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Nach meinem Dafürhalten sind sie die Nachkommen der Stämme Sebulon und Naphtali. (S. 2. B. der Könige Cap. 15, V. 29, Jesaias Cap. 8, V. 33.)

Kurdistan gehört mehr dem Namen als der That nach zum türkischen Reiche. Die Gebirgsbewohner, seit uralten Zeiten an Unabhängigkeit gewöhnt, hinter ihren natürlichen Wällen verschanzt, halten ihre eigenthümlichen Sitten und Gebräuche, Gesetze und Traditionen fest. Sie setzen so ihre freie Existenz fort und zahlen dem Sultan einen kleinen jährlichen Tribut, jedoch auch diesen nur dann, wenn sie selbst wollen. Sie bilden eine Art Bund unabhängiger Stämme, deren jeder unter einem besonderen Häuptling steht. Die Stämme theilen sich wieder in Familiengruppen und leben meist in blutigen Streitigkeiten und Fehden untereinander.

II.

Die hier und da zerstreuten und zum Dableiben gezwungenen Juden sind im wahren Sinne des Wortes von wilden Stämmen umgeben. Oft sind fünf, zehn bis zwanzig jüdische Familien Eigenthum eines Kurden und werden von diesem mit Abgaben und Mißhandlungen überladen. Drückende Steuern lasten auf ihnen, die sich für den Aermsten bis auf fünfhundert Piaster jährlich belaufen. Endlich sind sie gehalten, zu verschiedenen Jahreszeiten Frohndienste zu verrichten, die Felder ihres Gebieters zu bebauen, ohne die geringste Schadloshaltung dafür verlangen zu können oder zu erhalten.

III.

Der Herr gebietet über Leben und Tod seiner Sklaven, er verkauft sie nach seinem Gefallen an einen Andern, entweder in ganzen Familien oder einzelne Glieder derselben. Wenn ein Herr zu Rosse einen Juden oder Nestorianer auf seinem Wege antrifft, so läßt er ihn bis zur Stallthür vor sich herlaufen, ohne ihm zu erlauben, einmal Athem zu schöpfen. Diese grausame Gewohnheit wiederholt sich fast täglich.

IV.

Ein Gebrauch, der an die ganze feudalistische Barbarei des Mittelalters erinnert, ist das sogenannte Herrenrecht. — Wenn ein

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junger Israelit oder Nestorianer heirathen will, so muß er seine Braut dem Herrn, dem sie angehört, abkaufen; denn durch den Heirathsvertrag kommt die junge Frau unter die Herrschaft eines andern Gebieters und dadurch erleidet der erste Herr einen Verlust der jährlichen Kopfsteuer, wofür stets eine Entschädigungssumme gefordert wird. Zudem soll die Braut, ehe sie in das Haus ihres Mannes einzieht, den Lüsten ihres Herrn dienen, was ein sehr alter bei den Orientalen eingeführter Gebrauch zu sein scheint, denn schon die Talmudisten sprechen davon. [1]

Erst seit wenigen Jahren ist dieser empörende Mißbrauch abgeschafft und in eine Geldabgabe verwandelt, wozu ein blutiger Vorfall die Veranlassung gab, da nämlich ein junges Mädchen nach verzweifeltem Widerstande ihren Ehrenräuber tödtete. Ein Mißbrauch hat jedoch den andern ersetzt, das Recht des Herrn muß erkauft werden.

V.

Die Juden, welche die Ortschaften Kurdistans bewohnen, kennen das Gesetz Mosis kaum dem Namen nach. Wenige unter ihnen können lesen und ihre einzige religiöse Kenntniß besteht in dem Kriath Schema,[2] von welchem sie jedoch nur den ersten Vers kennen. Seit einiger Zeit sendet man ihnen aus Bagdad Bibeln und Gebetbücher zu. Ihre Mailum besitzen den Schulchan Aruch Beth Joseph (die Sammlung), alles Uebrige ist ihnen gänzlich unbekannt und ihr ganzer Gottesdienst beschränkt sich auf einige herkömmliche Verrichtungen, die mechanisch und abergläubisch ausgeübt werden.

Ich habe hier noch eines alterthümlichen traditionellen Gebrauches zu erwähnen, der sowohl in Kurdistan wie im ganzen Orient beobachtet wird. Wenn eine Frau in Wochen kommt, so schüttet man auf eine mit glühenden Kohlen versehene Rauchpfanne wohlriechende Kräuter, mit welchen zuerst die Synagoge und dann die Stube, in der sich die Kindbetterin befindet, geräuchert wird. Die kurdischen Israeliten sagen, daß sie damit

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[1] Messechet Ketubot Fol. 3, S. 2.

[2] 5. B. Moses Cap. 6, V. 4.

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richtigeres gefunden habe.[1] Der Todestag Esra's wird im Selichot der portugiesischen Juden auf den 9. Theiwod (Januar) festgesetzt, der Seder Olam sagt, er sei gegen Anfang des Jahres 3500 nach biblischer Zeitrechnung gestorben.

Viele Juden von Bagdad und Bassora feiern bei dem Grabe Esra's das Wochenfest und nehmen an den frommen Ceremonien Theil. Die Araber kennen den Zweck dieser Wallfahrer und legen ihnen kein Hinderniß in den Weg.

Koath. — Suk-e-Schejuch. — Gumruk. — Gorna.

Nach abermaliger zweitägiger Wasserfahrt gelangte ich nach Koath (Kut-el-Amara). Zwölf Stunden von diesem Orte liegt der Marktflecken Suk-e-Schejuch, von den Arabern Sukasuk genannt, wohin man von Koath auf dem Kanal Scheh-Sah, der den Euphrat mit dem Tigris verbindet, gelangt. Es wohnen dort etwa vierzig Judenfamilien, die sich mit Handel beschäftigen und in erträglicher Lage leben. Ein Arm des Tigris theilt sich hier in mehre kleine Ströme, und wenige Stunden von da entfließt auch dem Euphrat ein Arm. Die Araber benutzen diese kleineren Ströme, um sie durch Gräben auf ihre Felder zur Bewässerung zu leiten, womit ich sie mehrfach beschäftigt sah. Der Tigris ist hier so ungestüm, daß er ganze Felsblöcke mit sich fortreißt, und in seinem reißenden Falle die Ufer überströmt. Die Bewohner der Ufer bauen vergebens Dämme, um seinen Ueberschwemmungen vorzubeugen und ihn in sein Bett einzuengen. Der Lauf des Flusses ist sehr veränderlich und seine vielfachen Krümmungen erschweren die Schifffahrt. — Die Gegend wird von zahlreichen kriegerischen Araberstämmen bewohnt, die fast sämmtlich unabhängig sind, obgleich der Scheik des Landes die Oberhoheit des

[1] Benjamin de Tudela, S. 73, spricht von dem Grabe Esra's. Er sagt, es liege am Flusse Samura an der persischen Grenze, und es wohnen dort viele Mahomedaner so wie 1500 Juden, welche vier Synagogen besäßen. Ich fand es in der Wüste. — Pethachia S. 192 verlegt es an die Grenze von Babylonien.

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man mir antwortete, daß dieselbe zur Arbeit bequem sei. Ich erinnerte mich dabei an die Opferkleider der Priester, welche nach mosaischem Gesetze[1] ebenfalls solche leichte Gewänder tragen mußten, um die Opfer rasch verrichten zu können, wobei die weiten egyptischen Kleider hinderlich und unbequem waren, und um zugleich die Priester beim Gottesdienst vom Volke zu unterscheiden, da nur sie solche Kleider tragen durften.

Am Sabbath legen sie diese Kleidung ab und tragen einen langen dunklen Rock aus Wollstoffen. Dieser Rock ist vor der Brust bis zum Gürtel zugeknöpft, von da ab fällt er in zwei Schößen bis auf die Knie, die Aermel gehen bis zur Faust und liegen sehr eng an. Nur die Reichsten tragen Schuhe, die Uebrigen größtentheils lederne Sandalen.

Die Frauen tragen ein gefärbtes Hemd, um den Kopf winden sie ein Tuch oder Stück Zeug, unter welchem ihre schwarzen Haare bis auf die Schultern herabhängen. Sie gehen barfuß, doch schmücken sie ihre Arme, Hände und Füße mit goldenen und silbernen Ringen, auch tragen sie zuweilen einen Nasenring, der bis an den Mund herabhängt.

VI.

Die verschiedenen Wollstoffe, welche die Juden in Kurdistan verfertigen, werden nicht in das Ausland ausgeführt. Es ist dies ein Gewerbszweig, welchen Viele von ihnen fleißig betreiben, auch verfertigen sie Teppiche. Ihre Webstühle sind äußerst einfach; auf zwei Stücken Holz, die in einer gewissen Entfernung von einander in die Erde gesteckt sind, fertigen sie gute, sogar schöne Stoffe an. Ein Theil der Vornehmeren treibt Ackerbau, man sieht sie Morgens mit ihren Frauen und Kindern in die Felder und Weinberge gehen, von wo sie erst Abends zurückkehren. Statt Wein zu keltern, begnügen sie sich die Trauben zu ihrem Gebrauche zu trocknen. Die Getreideernte reicht für den Lebensbedarf hin, Fruchtbäume werden wenig gepflanzt.

Die aus Flechtwerk errichteten Häuser haben ein nacktes Aussehen, sie sind einstöckig, doch ziemlich hoch und von Innen und

[1]) 3. B. Moses Cap. 8, V. 13. Cap. 16, V. 4.

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Außen mit einer Art Mörtel angestrichen. Im Sommer schläft man auf den Terrassen, um den Stichen der Scorpionen zu entgehen, die sich während dieser Jahreszeit häufig Nachts in den Häusern aufhalten. Die Nahrungsmittel werden so schlecht zubereitet, daß sie dem ärmsten Europäer Ekel erregen würden.

VII.

Ueberall wohin ich während der Ernte und Weinlese kam, fand ich einen sowohl von den Juden wie von den Kurden strenge befolgten Gebrauch, der mich an die Vorschriften der Bibel erinnerte.[1] Man sammelt nämlich niemals die Aehren, Trauben oder Früchte gänzlich ein, sondern man läßt den Antheil der Wittwen und Waisen stehen; es ist sogar gestattet, auf ein reifes Kornfeld zu gehen, dort Halme zu brechen und das Korn aus denselben an Ort und Stelle in Wasser abzukochen, doch dürfen die Aehren nicht geschnitten[2] und nicht mitgenommen werden. In den Weinbergen darf man Trauben pflücken und dieselben dort verzehren.[3]

Die Erstlingsgeschenke aller Arten von Früchten, welche die Juden ihrem Mailum, die Kurden ihrem Kadi darbringen, sind in Körbe aus Dattel- oder andern Blättern gestellt, und erinnern meiner Ansicht nach an die Opfer, welche in alten Zeiten die Juden ihren Priestern darbrachten.

Außer diesem werden noch mehre andere im Einklange mit der Bibel stehende Gebräuche in sehr frommer Weise befolgt, von welchen ich einige hier mittheile.

Wenn man auf dem Felde zwischen zwei Ortschaften einen Leichnam findet, so begeben sich die Obrigkeiten der umliegenden Orte auf den Platz, um durch genaue Ausmessung zu bestimmen,[4] welcher Stadt oder welchem Dorfe der Leichnam am nächsten liegt; der betreffende Ort muß dann das Blutgeld an die Familie des Todten zahlen. Kann man bei dieser Ausmessung nicht einig

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1 3. B. Moses Cap. 19, V. 9 und 10.
2 5. B. Moses Cap. 23, V. 26.
3 5. B. Moses Cap. 23, V. 25.
4 5. B. Moses Cap. 21, V. 2.

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werden, so entsteht Streit und Kampf auf dem Platze, der dann oftmals aufs neue mit Blut getränkt wird. — Die Juden, die an diesen Kämpfen Theil zu nehmen gezwungen sind, beweisen sich tapfer und wenn einer von den Ihrigen fällt, der keine Familie hat, welche sein Blutgeld fordert, so wird er heimgetragen, und auf dem jüdischen Kirchhofe beerdigt.

Allgemein üblich ist es, die auf freiem Felde gefundenen Leichname daselbst zu begraben. Aus dieser frommen Sitte erklärt sich die große Anzahl von Gräbern, welche man an den Wegen trifft; es sind die Ruhestätten derer, die von unvorhergesehenem Tode betroffen wurden, und unter denen sich Reisende und Missionäre befinden.

Ein im ganzen Orient von den Bekennern aller Religionssecten befolgter Gebrauch ist es, beim Eintritt in das Gotteshaus die Schuhe auszuziehen. Auch dies erinnert an die Vorschriften der Bibel. Jedem, der sich dieser Ehrfurchtsbezeugung nicht unterzieht, wird der Eintritt in das Heiligthum verboten.[1]

Eine Sitte, welche gesetzlich strenge von Juden und Kurden seit den ältesten Zeiten bis heute befolgt wird, ist die Enthaltsamkeit vom Schweinefleisch. Die Anwendung von Fett im Allgemeinen erzeugt in diesem Klima schon ekelhafte und ernste Krankheiten und ich habe Juden gekannt, die nur durch den fortwährenden Gebrauch des Olivenöls am ganzen Körper mit Geschwüren bedeckt waren. Zuweilen ist die Kopfhaut von einer Art Grind bedeckt, womit überhaupt dieses Uebel viele Aehnlichkeit hat.

VIII.

Die Lage der Juden in religiöser, moralischer und socialer Hinsicht ist folgende: Ihre Unwissenheit in religiöser Beziehung ist Mitleid erregend. Wenige unter ihnen können lesen und schreiben und sie stehen darin hinter allen unsern Glaubensbrüdern zurück, die ich auf meinen Reisen besucht habe. Es finden sich zwar einige Bibeln und Gebetbücher in diesen vergessenen Bergen, aber Wenige verstehen Gebrauch davon zu machen, noch weniger verstehen sie ihre Gebete zu verrichten. Die Elementarbegriffe und

[1] 2. B. Moses Cap. 3, V. 5. — Talmud Messechet Berachot Fol. 9.

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die Kenntniß der großen Ideen ihrer Vorfahren und Glaubensbrüder fehlen ihnen gänzlich, an vielen Orten haben sie sogar niemals einen Pentateuch gesehen.

Die Traditionen allein haben die Heilighaltung des Sabbaths und der biblischen Feste, so wie auch die Beschneidung und das Schächten bewahrt; doch werden diese heiligen Gebräuche nur so unvollkommen und mechanisch ausgeführt, daß man deutlich ersehen kann, wie sie weder den Zweck noch den Grund derselben verstehen und gar nicht wissen was sie thun.

In socialer Beziehung ist ihre Lage beklagenswerth, denn zum größten Theil leben sie in der drückendsten Sklaverei. Der Kurde kennt keinen Herrn und maßt sich in seiner Dummheit und Rohheit die übermüthigsten Rechte an, die ihm von Niemand streitig gemacht werden; er verfügt über das Eigenthum und Leben, selbst über die Gefühle seiner jüdischen Sklaven als unbeschränkter Gebieter. Die Nestorianer befinden sich ganz in derselben Lage wie die Juden.

Die Kopfsteuer, eine unerträgliche Last, genügt nicht; jeder geringfügige Umstand reicht hin und jedes Mittel ist gut genug, um das Dasein dieser Unglücklichen zu ängstigen und zu stören, man mißhandelt, verkauft und ermordet sie, wie es eben dem Gebieter gefällt. Sie genießen das bittere Brod ihrer Verbannung und benetzen es mit ihren Thränen und mit ihrem Blute. Ich habe mehre hundert in den Gebirgen zerstreut wohnende Familien besucht und nicht eine einzige gefunden, die dieser unerträglichen Existenz hätten entkommen können. — Ich vermag es nicht auszusprechen, was ich beim Anblick dieses Elends gefühlt habe, denn ihr Verfall und ihr Unglück sind unbeschreiblich. — Gegen äußere Angriffe werden sie zuweilen kräftigst geschützt, doch geschieht dies nicht etwa aus Edelmuth oder Gerechtigkeitsliebe, sondern lediglich im Interesse des selbstsüchtigen materiellen Vortheils ihrer kurdischen Gebieter.

In den Bezirken Kurdistans, die jetzt unter der Botmäßigkeit der hohen Pforte stehen, ist die Lage der Juden etwas erträglicher. Die von der Regierung angestellten Methusalem haben die Knechtschaft aufgehoben, die Kopfsteuer geht direct in die Hände des Pascha.

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Noch hat die Stunde der Gerechtigkeit und Menschlichkeit für diese Unglücklichen nicht geschlagen. Als ich gezwungen war, meine zweite Reise in die Gebirge von Kurdistan plötzlich aufzugeben und flüchtend meine Brüder zu verlassen, war ich von den Abgesandten von vier Städten und etwa dreißig anderen Ortschaften umringt, welche zu besuchen ich die Absicht hatte. Wie viele andere mag es noch in den übrigen Theilen dieses barbarischen Landes geben, die bisher ein dem Forscher und der Welt unbekanntes Dasein führen, und wie lange mag der Zustand ihrer Abgeschiedenheit noch währen!

Ich habe im VII. Abschnitt einige biblische Vorschriften mitgetheilt, die im Morgenlande beobachtet werden, und führe hier am Schlusse noch eine Anzahl Gebräuche an, die, gegen die mosaischen Gesetze verstoßend, seit dem grauesten Alterthum mit den Sitten dieser Völkerschaften verwebt sind.

Bei der Schilderung meiner Reise durch den Libanon habe ich der unsittlichen Gebräuche unter den dort wohnenden Drusenstämmen erwähnt, auf welche ich hier nochmals hinweise.

In mehren Orten wird die Sünde der Kinder Sodoms, gegen welche Moses eifert, öffentlich begangen, ohne daß man dies Verbrechen für eine Entheiligung der Natur hält.

Der Sklavenhandel, diese moralische Pest des Morgenlandes, wird in größter Ausdehnung betrieben, und ist ein wesentlicher Bestandtheil der Sitten dieser Völkerschaften.

Mit einem Worte: Alles was unser großer Gesetzgeber verbietet, das Uebel, welches er vorhergesehen und bezeichnet und vor dem er unsere Voreltern bewahren wollte, wüthet noch heute unter diesen Völkern. — Wer die Bibel verstehen und den Talmud durchdringen will, der sollte vorher die Morgenlande durchreisen und durchforschen, manche dunkle Stelle würde ihm im klarsten Lichte erscheinen. Ich beabsichtige später vielleicht Erklärungen über einige Berichte des Talmud zu geben, die gewissermaßen schwierig erscheinen.

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Capitel 14.

Kirkuk.

Das Manna. — Die Wachteln. — Das Naphta (Bergöl). — Gräber der Propheten Daniel, Ananias, Misael und Asarias. — Ceremonien und Gebräuche bei diesen Gräbern.

Die Stadt Kirkuk am Chaffeh-See wird von den Juden für das biblische Kallach[1] gehalten und mit diesem Namen in allen ihren öffentlichen Schriften noch heute bezeichnet. Sie besteht aus zwei Abtheilungen, deren eine befestigt ist und auf dem Gipfel eines Berges liegt, deren andere aber in der Ebene sich ausdehnt. In dem ebenen Stadttheile ist der Sitz des Handels und dort wohnen unsere Glaubensbrüder.

Die Stadt bietet einen Anblick dar, der vielleicht einzig in seiner Art ist. Schwerlich wird man jemals einen unförmlicheren Steinhaufen in einen Sumpf eingesenkt sehen, der während der Regenzeit ganz mit Wasser überschwemmt ist. Die Stadt scheint dann in einem förmlichen Moraſt zu schwimmen, den Niemand zu betreten wagt. Die Häuser sind etwas reinlicher gehalten und die Speisen besser zubereitet als in Kurdistan.

Die Umgegend von Kirkuk ist sehr fruchtbar und bedarf nur einer verständigen Bearbeitung, da sie sehr quellenreich ist. Die Bewohner treiben einen nicht ganz unbedeutenden Handel mit Garnen und Stoffen von Baumwolle. Die Landessprache ist die arabische, die allgemeine Kleidung die mohamedanische.

Gegen die Monate November und December lassen sich hier ganze Schaaren von Wachteln nieder, die aus verschiedenen Gegenden kommen; sie sind etwa so groß wie ein achttägiges Huhn und können nicht gut fliegen. Sie werden aus diesem Grunde leicht und in so großen Massen gefangen, daß man sie zu zwei Para (1 Pfennig) pro Stück verkauft. Die Juden sowol wie die

[1] 1. B. Moses Cap. 10, V. 11.

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übrigen Bewohner essen diese Vögel und ich selbst habe sie genossen; sie schmecken aber nur gut, wenn sie jung sind.

Eine andere merkwürdige Erscheinung, die an die Reise der Juden durch die Wüste erinnert, ist das Manna, welches hier in Körnerform mit dem Thau herabfällt. Die Körner sind von weißlicher Farbe und fühlen sich hart an; man sammelt sie bei Tagesanbruch in Gefäße und stellt sie an die Sonne, durch deren Wärme sie geschmolzen und zu einer käseartigen Masse werden, in welchem Zustande man sie auf Brod gestrichen zum Frühstück genießt. Ich fand den Geschmack dieses Manna süßlich, dem Honig ähnlich, und von angenehmem Geruch. Das Manna, welches in der Gegend des Berges Sinai fällt, von welchem ich ebenfalls genossen habe, schmeckt noch besser; man läßt es dort auch an der Sonne zergehen, wodurch es hart wie durchgekochter Honig wird. Man findet dieselbe Erscheinung auch in der Gegend von Mussul und Bagdad, doch sind dort nur die Bäume damit bedeckt, während bei Kirkuk alle Felder und Wiesen damit überstreut sind.

Ein anderes Naturprodukt, das für die Bewohner von großem Nutzen ist, und auch in den ausländischen Handel kommt, ist das Naphta (Bergöl). Die zahlreichen Sümpfe und Gräben sind mit einer dünnen schwärzlichen Flüssigkeit überzogen, welche, von den Bewohnern gesammelt, das Naphta im natürlichen Zustande darstellt. Es wird zur Beleuchtung und zu verschiedenen anderen Zwecken verwandt und hat, wenn es brennt, einen unangenehmen Geruch.[1]

Zwischen der Ober- und Unter-Stadt, am Fuße des Berges, erhebt sich in der Mitte eines Hofes ein Gebäude, welches vier Grabmäler enthält. Das erste derselben, links an dem Eingange nahe der Mauer, soll nach der Behauptung der Bewohner das Grab des Propheten Daniel sein, während man die drei anderen ein wenig davon entfernt und von einander getrennt liegenden Gräber für die der Propheten Ananias, Misael und Asarias

[1] Es ist möglich, daß dies das Naphta ist, von welchem die Talmudisten im Meschecht Sabath (Abschn. 2) sprechen. Siehe Ritter's Erdkunde Th. 9, Buch 3, S. 555. — In der Moldau finden sich gleichfalls derartige Erdölquellen, und wird dort das Erdöl (Dohot genannt) zum Einschmieren des Lederzeuges ꝛc. benutzt.

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hält.[1] Es sind kleine viereckige Sarkophage, mit einem Dache überdeckt und von einer Holzwand geschützt, die in noch ziemlich gutem Zustande ist, obgleich sie die Spuren hohen Alters trägt. Die drei Gefährten Daniels waren der Bibel zufolge von Nebucadnezar in einen feurigen Ofen geworfen, aus welchem sie unversehrt hervorgingen.[2] Unleserliche Inschriften bedecken diese drei Sarkophage, während das Grab Daniels keine Inschrift hat. Ich zweifle an der Identität desselben, da Daniel in Persien gestorben und begraben sein soll,[3] wage jedoch nichts darüber festzustellen, weil ich trotz genauer Forschungen weder den bezeichneten Ort noch die geringste Spur dieses Grabes entdecken konnte. Vielleicht ist die Angabe der Bewohner von Kirkuk richtig, da sie einer Tradition aus dem höchsten Alterthum entstammt.

Die Gräber sind in wohlerhaltenem Umstande und erst vor Kurzem mit prachtvollen gestickten Teppichen verziert worden. Alle Bewohner ohne Unterschied des Glaubens wallfahrten mit größter Ehrfurcht zu denselben. Die Juden begeben sich namentlich am ersten Tage des Wochenfestes, am 6. Siwan (Mai) dorthin, um das Mussaphgebet zu verrichten, doch konnten sie mir als Grund dieser Sitte nichts als das alte Herkommen angeben.

Der Wunder- und Aberglaube, deren Wiege von jeher der Orient war, finden hier mehr Anhänger als an irgend einem anderen Orte. Diese Gräber sollen eine wunderthätige Heilkraft für alle Krankheiten besitzen, auch fleht man um ihre mysteriöse Vermittelung für den guten Erfolg bei wichtigen Unternehmun-

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1 Benjamin de Tudela S. 68 spricht auch von diesen Gräbern, sagt aber, daß sie eine Stunde vom Grabe des Propheten Hesekiel liegen, wovon wir unten reden. Das Grab Daniels legt er nach Schuschan. — Pethachia S. 183 sagt dasselbe. — Ritter's Erdkunde Th. 9, Buch 3, S. 553 bezeichnet die vier Gräber gleichlautend mit meiner Angabe. S. 294 bis 308 führt dasselbe Werk an, daß das Grab Daniels sich im Bette eines Flusses bei Suschan oder Susa befinde. Man habe den Fluß abgeleitet, in seinem Bette ein Grab von Steinen ausgebaut und dann den Fluß wieder darüber geführt. Die Angabe Tudela's, daß der Sarg Daniels in einem Glaskasten auf einer Kette inmitten der Brücke hängt, wird S. 306 für unrichtig erklärt.

2 Daniel Cap. 1, V. 7 und Cap. 3, V. 23. 26.

3 Seder Hadoroth S. 36.

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gen und ruft sie in allen Angelegenheiten des Lebens als Schutzengel an. Diese allgemeine Verehrung hat auf die Lage der Juden, die sich in dem geheiligten Schutzbezirke der Gräber Daniels und seiner Gefährten befinden, einen vortheilhaften Einfluß, da sie von den halb barbarischen Bewohnern viel weniger gequält und bedrückt werden, als an andern Orten.

Nachdem ich Kirkuk verlassen hatte, führte mich mein Weg durch eine öde und traurige Wüste. Unermeßliche Strecken ohne alle Vegetation, die sich so weit das Auge reicht hinziehen, und immer ferner am Horizont hinausdehnen, je weiter man schreitet; fliegender Sand, den das leiseste Lüftchen erhebt und zu Hügeln thürmt, die eben so schnell verschwinden; ein bewegliches Staubmeer, in welchem man nur selten eine Karawane antrifft: das ist ein Bild der Landstrecken, welche ich zu durchreisen hatte. Ganze Karawanen werden manchmal durch die Sandwogen aufgehalten, die wie die Ebbe und Fluth des Meeres auf- und niedersteigen, halb verschüttet erwarten sie oft einen günstigen Lufthauch, einen brennenden Windstoß der Wüste, der ihrem Stillstande ein Ende macht.

Wenige armselige Dörfer und zerstreute Araberzelte, die in der Sandwüste auftauchen, erquicken das durch den einförmigen Anblick ermüdete Auge. Die versengende Sonnengluth machte es unmöglich, bei Tage zu reisen, wir schlugen deshalb mit Sonnenaufgang unsere Zelte auf, ruhten bis zur Nacht aus und benutzten die Kühle derselben zur Weiterreise.

Sieben Tage währt die Reise durch diese Wüstenstrecken, bis man endlich, drei Tagereisen vor der alten Kalifenstadt Bagdad, zu einem ungeheuren Palmwalde gelangt, der sich bis in die Nähe dieser Stadt ausdehnt. Man muß eine Wüste durchreist haben, um zu empfinden, was der Wanderer beim Anblick der lebendigen, üppigen, im reichsten Pflanzenschmuck prangenden Natur fühlt, wenn er von Müdigkeit erschöpft, von den glühenden Strahlen der Sonne versengt, das Auge erschlafft durch den blendenden gelblichen Sand der monotonen Wüste, in den erquickenden

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Schatten des Waldes tritt. Er fühlt sich wie neu geboren und beginnt zu hoffen, daß er wieder zu Stätten gelangt, wo Wesen seiner Art wohnen.

Beim Austritt aus diesem Urwalde, den stets ein erfrischender Schatten bedeckt, erblickt man am Horizont die schlanken Minarets und die stolzen majestätischen Kuppeln der Moscheen von Bagdad, deren weiße Linien in der Azurbläue des Himmels scharf hervortreten. Rechts und links scheint die Stadt von einem glänzenden Gürtel umschlossen zu sein, der durch die Wasser des rasch dahin rauschenden Tigris gebildet wird.

Capitel 15.

Bagdad.[1]

Die Juden von Bagdad und ihre glückliche Lage; ihre Wissenschaften und Obrigkeiten. — Synagoge. — Hochzeitsgebräuche. — Grab des Marabut Abd-el-Kader. — Angebliches Grab des Priesters Josua. — Allgemeine Schilderungen der Stadt, Handel und Sitten. — Die Ruinen von Babylon. — Hillah. — Birs Nimrod (Nimrodsthurm).

Die jüdische Bevölkerung von Bagdad zählt ungefähr 3000 Familien. Sie trägt durch ihre Wissenschaften, ihren Fleiß und ihren Wohlstand zum Fortschritt des Handels, zur allgemeinen Thätigkeit und zu dem blühenden Zustande dieser wichtigen Pro-

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[1] Kayserling, P. Teixeira: Wir kehren nun mit Teixeira in Bagdad ein, dieser unter einem freundlichen Himmel gelegenen großen, reichen und prächtigen Stadt mit ihren schönen Frauen, deren Augen unserem Wandersmann besonders gut gefielen. Bagdad hatte zu seiner Zeit über 20,000 Häuser (casas) von denen 200 bis 300 die Juden bewohnten. Zwölf oder dreizehn dieser jüdischen Familien versicherten, daß ihre Vorfahren zur Zeit der ersten Tempelzerstörung hierher verpflanzt worden wären. Die Juden in Bagdad, von denen einige Gewerbe treiben, aber sehr arm sind, leben in einem besonderen Stadttheile, mit ihrer Kanis oder Synagoge — vielleicht die Kenisa „gdolah des Rosch Hagolah", welche Benjamin

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vinz sehr viel bei. Man findet Kaufleute vom ersten Range unter ihnen, die ihre Handelsbeziehungen bis in die weitesten Fernen ausdehnen und mit Erfolg nicht allein gegen die Concurrenz der Eingeborenen, sondern auch gegen die des Auslandes arbeiten. In keinem andern Orte des Orients habe ich meine Glaubensbrüder in so wahrhaft glücklichen Umständen und so würdig dieser Lage gefunden. In Hinsicht des Aberglaubens, dieser Frucht der Unwissenheit und Folge der zahlreichen Traditionen, welche die Morgenländer mit der Muttermilch einsaugen, können die Bagdader Juden als das Ideal der jüdischen Bevölkerung des Orients betrachtet werden. Sie sind von edler Gesinnung, gastfrei, erleuchtet und wohlwollend im Umgange. Durch den fortwährenden Verkehr mit Fremden haben sie sich Anstand, Höflichkeit, Lebensart und eine Weltkenntniß angeeignet, welche sie den civilisirtesten Völkern Europas nahe stellen. Ihre Rabbinen sind wohl unterrichtet und genießen die größte Achtung.

Die drei vorzüglichsten Rabbinen sind mit richterlicher Gewalt bekleidet; sie führen den Titel Dajanim (Friedensrichter), und werden von der Gemeinde selbst gewählt und in dieses wichtige

von Tudela erwähnt* — in freier Religionsübung. So Teixeira. Vergleichen wir mit den von ihm angegebenen Zahlen die Berichte des Benjamin von Tudela und des aus der Moldau, so kommen wir zu der Folgerung, daß die jüdische Bevölkerung Bagdads zu seiner Zeit sehr abgenommen haben muß. Benjamin von Tudela fand 1000 Familien,** und Teixeira berichtet von 300 Familien! Es wäre überhaupt zu wünschen, daß unsere Reisenden auf das Zu- und Abnehmen der Juden in den von ihnen bereisten Gegenden ihr Augenmerk richteten. Aehnlich Teixeira spricht auch Benjamin von Tudela (S. 60, 61) von einzelnen Familien Bagdads, welche sich eines hohen Alters rühmten. So berichtet dieser von einem R. Elieser ben Zemach, der seinen Stammbaum bis zum Propheten Samuel zu führen wußte, „und er und seine Brüder kannten die Melodien, die in dem Tempel zur Zeit seines Bestehens gesungen wurden.“ Ein R. Daniel, welchen Benjamin kannte, leitete seine Abstammung aus dem davidischen Königshause ab.

* Teixeira, 121: Haura de doscientas a tres cientas casas de Judios, de que las 12. o 15. affirman que son aun del primero captiuerio, algunos dellos son facultosos, peró los mas pobriscimos; biuen en barrio separado con su Kanis o Sinagoga libremente. Damals hatte Bagdad 10 armenische Christenfamilien und 80 Nestorianer.

** Benjamin von Tudela 59. 60.

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Amt eingesetzt. Zur Zeit meiner Anwesenheit war Rabbi Jacob, Sohn Joseph Jacob's, geachtet wegen seiner Gelehrsamkeit, seiner Milde und seines edlen Charakters, der erste Dajan, sein Beisitzer Rabbi Eliahu Obadja, ein reicher und gelehrter Mann, der durch Karawanen einen bedeutenden Handel nach Damascus treibt. Diese Richter können jedoch keine Strafen feststellen, da diese Macht nur der Chacham Baschi (Oberrabbiner) besitzt. Der Chacham Baschi ist zu seiner Würde direct von der hohen Pforte ernannt, er repräsentirt die Gemeinde bei der höchsten Obrigkeit und wacht über die religiösen Interessen, die Verwaltungs- und Civil-Angelegenheiten. Zugleich erhebt er von den Juden die rückständigen Steuern. Jedes männliche Gemeindemitglied hat vom fünfzehnten Jahre an eine jährliche Abgabe von 15 bis 120 Piastern zu erlegen, welche in vierteljährlichen Raten erhoben wird.

Der Chacham Baschi wird in seinem Amte durch einen Rath der angesehensten Gemeindemitglieder unterstützt, deren Zustimmung zur Rechtsgültigkeit seiner Handlungen erforderlich ist. Zu meiner Zeit bekleidete diese hohe Würde der Rabbi Raphael Kassin aus Aleppo, ein Mann von etwa dreißig Jahren, von stattlicher Figur, edlem Aussehen und mit einem langen schwarzen Barte geziert. Er genießt der besonderen Gunst des Pascha, der ihm eine Ehrenwache von vier Gavaz (Polizeisoldaten) zugetheilt hat, außerdem stehen in seinem Dienste 5 oder 6 Juden, welche seine Verordnungen und Befehle zu überbringen und auszuführen haben. Wenn er ausgeht, was stets mit einem wahrhaft fürstlichen Gepränge geschieht, so reitet die Ehrengarde voraus. Als höchstes Zeichen des Vertrauens und der Achtung ist er mit dem kaiserlichen Orden des Nissan decorirt; eine Auszeichnung, deren sich sehr wenige Juden im ottomanischen Reiche zu rühmen haben.

Unter den Befehlen des Chacham Baschi verwaltet der Nassi die Gemeinde. Bis zum Jahre 1849/50 war Rabbi Joseph Mose Reuben, ein sehr gelehrter, reicher und wohlthätiger Mann, Nassi der Gemeinde. Er erzeigte mir mehrmals die Ehre, mich zur Tafel zu ziehen. Vor Entstehung des hohen Amtes des Chacham Baschi wurde der Nassi stets unter den reichsten und einflußreichsten Juden gewählt; er hatte eine große Macht, die, wenn er sie mißbrauchen wollte, nicht nur von seinen Glaubensgenossen, sondern

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auch von den Muselmanen gefürchtet ward; denn da er nur von der Gnade des Pascha abhing, so konnte er von diesem mittelst einer Geldsumme unbedingte Freiheit für alle seine Handlungen erhalten, und diese dann seinen Capricen und Interessen gemäß ausüben, an wem er wollte. Jetzt hat sich die Gemeinde in zwei Parteien getrennt, und die Anhänger des früheren Nassi haben sich einen Dajan gewählt, Namens Avdola Halevy, aus Damascus.

Der religiöse Unterricht unter den Juden von Bagdad ist vorzüglich, es besteht dort eine große Jeschiwa (Rabbinatsschule), auf welcher 60 junge Rabbinen Theologie studiren. Diese Schule steht unter der Leitung des gelehrten Rabbi Abdolah ben Abraham Seumech, der sein Amt unentgeltlich verwaltet. Er ist ein sehr reicher Mann, der zu meiner Zeit eines der bedeutendsten Handelshäuser führte, die Verwaltung seines Geschäfts indeß seinem Vater Abraham Somech übertragen hat, um sich selbst ausschließlich seinem frommen Amte widmen zu können.

Die Juden bewohnen in Bagdad ein besonderes Stadtviertel, doch dürfen sie sich nach Gutdünken auch in den anderen Stadtvierteln ansiedeln und viele von ihnen wohnen unter den Muselmanen. Die Gemeinde hat neun Synagogen, von welchen sich acht in ein und demselben Hofe befinden. Bei einer Büchse am Eingange dieses Hofes stehen zwei dazu gewählte Gemeindemitglieder, um Morgens und Abends von den Vorbeigehenden die Almosen in Empfang zu nehmen, wodurch täglich gegen 1000 Piaster aufkommen, die hauptsächlich zur Unterstützung der Gemeindearmen und zur Erhaltung der Jeschiwa verwandt werden. Zu demselben Zwecke ist auch das Koscher-Fleisch mit einer Taxe belegt.

Die neunte Synagoge ist ein sehr großes Gebäude, welches von sechszehn Säulen getragen wird, man liest in ihr am 14. und 15. Adar (März) die Megila (Buch Esther). Das Innere des Gebäudes bietet nichts Merkwürdiges dar, die Decke ist mit eingetriebenen Bildhauerwerken verziert. Diese Synagoge wird Beth Hakneſseth Scheik (Isaak) Gaon genannt.[1] In einem Neben-

[1] Benjamin de Tudela S. 60 spricht von 10 Jeschiwas, und S. 63 u. 64 von 28 Synagogen und 1000 Judenfamilien; der letzteren Synagoge indeß erwähnt er gar nicht. — Pethachia S. 173 giebt dieselbe Zahl an. S. 182 spricht von drei Synagogen.

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zimmer der Synagoge befindet sich das Grab dieses Gelehrten; es ist ein mannshoher Katafalk mit vierfarbigen Fahnen geschmückt, bei welchem stets zehn gelehrte Rabbinen lesen und ihre Gebete verrichten.

Am Freitag Nachmittag gegen zwei oder drei Uhr hört bei den Juden in Bagdad alle Beschäftigung auf und die Handlungshäuser werden geschlossen. Jeder begiebt sich nach Hause, badet sich, legt Festkleider an und eilt dann zur Synagoge, wo das Abendgebet verrichtet wird, welches eine Stunde vor Sonnenuntergang endet. Darauf kehrt man in die Familienkreise zurück, singt fromme hebräische Lieder und trinkt Anisbranntwein. Sobald die letzten Sonnenstrahlen verschwunden sind, sagt man das Kriath Schema und genießt dann das Nachtmahl, das sich zuweilen bis zur Mitternachtsstunde ausdehnt. Am Sonnabend geht man zum Morgengottesdienst, darauf wird gefrühstückt, und dann eine religiöse Lectüre mit solcher Regelmäßigkeit und Andacht vorgenommen, daß Jeder, der auch nur im Vorbeigehen zuhört, sich erbauen muß. Gewöhnlich sind mehre Familien zu solchen Vorlesungen, wozu in der Regel die Propheten genommen werden, vereinigt. Die Familienmitglieder hören mit vieler Andacht zu und die anwesenden Fremden folgen ihrem Beispiele. Nach der Vorlesung stattet man sich gegenseitig Besuche ab und den Nachmittag benutzt man zu Spaziergängen. Die Reichen haben an den Ufern des Tigris schöne Landhäuser und Palmgärten, wo sie den Sommer zubringen.

Mit dem Gefühle der höchsten Genugthuung und Freude sah ich, wie feierlich, andachtsvoll und mit welcher Genauigkeit nach den gesetzlichen Vorschriften in Bagdad der Sabbath geheiligt wird. Mit wahrer Wonne habe ich den Vorlesungen und den brüderlichen Vereinen mit beigewohnt, wo eine freie und herzliche Freude stets durch tiefes, wahres Wissen erhöht war. In keinem andern Lande, wo ich unsere Glaubensbrüder besuchte, habe ich sie so sorgenlos, so glücklich, und so frei von den Verfolgungen und Bedrückungen der Intoleranz gefunden. Wenn ich oftmals mit trüben Blicken das Elend und die tiefe Unwissenheit unserer Brüder ansah, wenn ich sah, wie sie unter dem Joche des Despotismus nur noch als Schatten eines einst so berühmten, großen

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und gebildeten Volkes umherirrten, und ihre Lage mit der ihrer Brüder in Bagdad verglich, so wollte mich die Hoffnung nicht verlassen, daß bald auch für sie eine glücklichere und bessere Zukunft heraufdämmern werde.

In Bagdad fand ich den Ausspruch der Bibel bewahrheitet: „Und du wirst dich der Gegenwart deines Herrn erfreuen, du, dein Sohn, deine Tochter, dein Knecht, deine Magd, und der Levite, der in deinen Thoren wohnt, der Fremde, die Wittwe und die Waise, die bei dir wohnen.“[1]

Ich selbst wurde mit einer Gastfreiheit und mit einem von Herzen kommenden Wohlwollen aufgenommen, woran sich die Seele erquickt. Eines der angesehensten Familienhäupter, Awdul Asis ben Awdul Nawi, nahm mich während meiner Anwesenheit auf. Mit vieler Freude sah ich, wie die Armen, die Wittwen und Waisen vor dem Beginn des Sabbaths die Spenden der Reichen empfingen, wie sie oftmals neben ihren gewöhnlichen Gaben am Tische der Wohlhabenden noch bewirthet wurden. Der Anblick all dieses Glückes, dieser Frömmigkeit und Heilighaltung der Vorschriften des Gesetzes war für mich eine wahre Erquickung, eine Oase in der Wüste, er belebte meinen Muth und meine Kräfte, um meine Forschungen fortzusetzen.

Eine besondere Bemerkung, die ich in Bagdad machte, ist folgende: Es werden in der Stadt etwa ein Drittel mehr Mädchen geboren als Knaben, und bei der Geburt eines Mädchens füllt sich das Haus mit Betrübniß, da man an die bedeutenden Kosten der Ausstattung denkt, denn sie verheirathen sich dazu noch in sehr jugendlichem Alter; so war z. B. einige Jahre vor meiner Anwesenheit ein Mädchen von 8 bis 10 Jahren mit einem jungen Manne von 18 bis 20 Jahren verheirathet worden. Es wurden durch solche jugendliche Heirathen vielfaches Unglück und Uebel hervorgerufen, weshalb man die gesetzliche Bestimmung traf, daß die

[1] 5. B. Moses Cap. 16, V. 11—14.

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Reichen ihre Töchter nicht vor dem zehnten, die Mittelklassen nicht vor dem elften und die ärmere Bevölkerung nicht vor dem zwölften Jahre verheirathen sollen. Bleibt dagegen ein Mädchen bis zum fünfzehnten Jahre unverehelicht, so kann sie alle Heirathshoffnungen aufgeben; ähnlich geht es den Wittwen, die gar keine Aussicht zu einer zweiten Ehe haben, da Jeder eher ein armes Mädchen als eine noch so reiche, jugendliche und schöne Wittwe heirathet, und man hat mich versichert, daß die jüdische Gemeinde allein gegen 4—500 Wittwen zähle.

Die Heirathsceremonien sind folgende: Wenn Jemand heirathen will, so kennt er nicht etwa, wie bei uns, schon seine zukünftige Frau, sondern es geht nur die Mutter oder eine sonstige Verwandte hin und sieht sich dieselbe an; gefällt dieser nun das Mädchen, so muß es dem Manne recht sein.

Die Nacht vor der Trauung nennt man Lel-al-Chana (das arabische „Lel" bedeutet Nacht, „Chana" ist eine rothe Farbe). Die Verwandten der Braut versammeln sich im Hause der Eltern derselben und beginnen zu singen und in landesüblicher Weise zu musiciren. Nachdem so etwa zwei Stunden zugebracht sind, nimmt man eine dazu bereitete Farbe (Chana) und bestreicht damit der Braut und ihren Gespielinnen die Handflächen mit den Nägeln und die Fußsohlen bis über die Zehen. Wenn am andern Morgen die Farbe abgewaschen wird, so bleibt noch mehre Wochen lang eine dunkelrothe Färbung der bezeichneten Stellen bemerklich. Dieselbe Ceremonie wird im Hause des Bräutigams mit diesem und seinen Begleitern vollzogen und dann in beiden Häusern die ganze Nacht mit Gesang und Musik hingebracht, weil man es für Braut und Bräutigam gefährlich hält, die Nacht vor der Hochzeit zu schlafen. Ich wohnte dieser Ceremonie in beiden Häusern bei und muß gestehen, daß sie mir sehr gefiel.

Am andern Tage etwa drei Stunden vor Sonnenuntergang kommen die Chachamim mit dem Bräutigam und seinen Verwandten in das Haus der Braut und man beginnt die Vorbereitungen zur Trauung. Die Braut mit den Frauen sitzt verschleiert hinter einem Vorhange. Der Chacham entschleiert das Gesicht der Braut, zeigt sie dem Bräutigam und läßt dann den Schleier wieder fallen, denn nach dem Talmud soll die Trauung

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nicht stattfinden, ohne daß der Bräutigam die Braut gesehen hat.[1] Darauf wird die Trauung nach Vorschrift des Talmud vollzogen.

Nach Beendigung der Ceremonie kehren die Chachamim mit dem Bräutigam in sein Haus zurück, während die Braut in dem elterlichen Hause bleibt. Beim Anbruch der Nacht erst holt der Bräutigam mit seinen Begleitern die Braut ab und führt sie in seine Wohnung, wobei indeß die Eltern der jungen Frau nicht mitgehen. Dort findet nun ein kleines Mahl statt und man führt dann das junge Paar in ein besonderes Zimmer. Hat sich der Bräutigam von der Keuschheit seiner jungen Gattin überzeugt, so sendet man sofort eine Botschaft an ihre Eltern,[2] die Nacht aber wird in fröhlichem Gelage zugebracht. Erst am dritten Abend kommen die Eltern der jungen Frau mit allen Verwandten in das Haus des Schwiegersohnes. Dort finden dann große und kostspielige Festlichkeiten statt, wobei auch der Armen reichlich gedacht wird. Die ganzen Hochzeitsfeierlichkeiten währen nach dem patriarchalischen Gebrauch sieben volle Tage.

Die Stadt Bagdad wird durch den Tigris in zwei ungleiche Theile getheilt, deren größter, die eigentliche Stadt, von einer Mauer umschlossen ist, an deren Ende sich eine Festung erhebt, welche als Kaserne benutzt wird. Wenn man durch das Thor von Mussul in die Stadt tritt, so ist ihr Anblick großartig. Die Straßen, an denen sich die zahlreichen, mit den prachtvollsten Waaren gefüllten Läden befinden, sind breit, die Bazare kostbar, namentlich der, welcher in der Mitte der Stadt liegt.

Auf dem andern Ufer des Tigris liegt der Stadttheil, in welchem sämmtliche Karawanen ankommen und abgehen. Es ist ein ungeheuer großer Markt, auf welchem die fremden Kaufleute und Reisenden sich den Karawanen anschließen. Eine in schlechtem Zustande befindliche Brücke führt über den Fluß, dessen Ueberschwemmungen namentlich im Frühling großen Schaden anrichten.

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[1] Messechet Kiduschin S. 41.

[2] Vergl. eine Stelle im Talmud Jeruschalmi Messechet Pessachim Cap. 10.

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Wenn das Wasser anschwillt, so bedient man sich zum Uebersetzen eigenthümlicher Fahrzeuge, welche in einer Art von Körben bestehen, die aus Baumzweigen geflochten, mit Pech überzogen sind und eine weite Vertiefung haben; auch gebraucht man zu demselben Zwecke Kähne, die in zwei Abtheilungen getheilt sind, deren eine jede etwa 8—10 Personen fassen kann.

Die Straßen nach dem jüdischen Viertel entlang gehend, kam ich an einer Moschee von imposantem Ansehen vorbei, die rings mit einer Mauer umschlossen ist. In dieser Moschee befindet sich das Grab des großen Marabut Abd-el-Kader, welches von zahlreichen Pilgern besucht wird. Die Tradition erzählt, daß diese Moschee früher eine Synagoge war, und daß der Marabut niemand anders als der berühmte Talmudist Rabbi Joseh Hagelili gewesen sei.

Die Sonnenhitze ist in Bagdad unerträglich, so daß man oft genöthigt ist, den Tag über zu Hause zu bleiben und zur Nachtzeit die Geschäfte zu besorgen. Der Hitze wegen hat man unterirdische Grotten angelegt, welche durch Wasserbehälter gekühlt werden. Im Sommer schläft man auf den Terrassen, um der erstickenden Zimmerluft und den Stichen der Scorpione zu entgehen. Diese wahre Landesplage findet man hier allenthalben und besonders in den engen Straßen, wo man ihnen bei Nacht mit einer Laterne versehen ausweichen muß. Die Scorpione sind hier von verschiedener Art und Farbe, es giebt schwarze, blaue und grüne; der Stich des schwarzen ist tödtlich und ein Heilmittel dagegen ist bis jetzt unbekannt. Gegen die Verwundungen der anderen Sorten gebraucht man folgende Mittel: 1) Man legt einen kleinen platten, schwarzblauen Stein auf die Wunde, welcher an derselben festsitzt und dort 24 Stunden kleben bleibt, bis das Gift herausgezogen ist. 2) Man brät einen Scorpion in Olivenöl und legt ihn auf die Wunde, kann man dazu denselben Scorpion bekommen, der die Wunde verursacht hat, so ist die Heilung um so sicherer. 3) Man schlachtet ein Schaf, öffnet dasselbe, und steckt das verwundete Glied in die Engeweide des noch warmen Thieres. 4) Man läßt einen starken Mann die Wunde aussaugen, was für denselben ganz gefahrlos ist. Endlich 5) macht man auf das verwundete Glied Eisumschläge. Alle

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diese Mittel müssen indeß sofort nach dem Stiche angewandt werden, denn die Wirkung des Giftes ist rasch und furchtbar.

Die Terrassen sind mit Blumen verziert und bepflanzt, und wenn die Hitze den Schlaf verscheucht, so versammelt man sich und bringt die Zeit mit geselligen Unterhaltungen hin. Die Zimmer der Reichen sind prachtvoll geschmückt und in fast europäischer Art gehalten.

Die Bevölkerung von Bagdad besteht aus vier verschiedenen Elementen. Im ersten Range stehen die Araber, Juden und Christen, ihnen folgen die Perser und Inder. Zwei Consuln residiren in der Stadt, ein französischer und ein englischer. Man spricht arabisch, türkisch, persisch und einzeln italienisch.

Die Männer kleiden sich türkisch, mit einer Pracht, die man nur im Orient kennt, die Fußbekleidung besteht in gelben Pantoffeln, deren Spitzen nach oben gekrümmt sind. Die Kleidung der Frauen ähnelt dem Negligé der Europäerinnen, als Kopfputz tragen sie einen kleinen rothen Fez (eine Art Mütze), dessen lange Gold- und Seidenquasten mit Perlen und Diamanten geschmückt sind. Die Männer färben die Wimpern, die Frauen die Wimpern und Brauen mit einem schwarzen Pulver (Kechol), welches für die Augen wohlthuend sein soll. (Vgl. Talmud, Messechet Schabath.) Wenn sie ausgehen, so tragen sie eine seidene Haik, eine Art Schürze, die bis an den Hals hinaufgeht; ein langer Schleier schützt sie vor den Sonnenstrahlen. In der Regel sind die Frauen von großer Schönheit und ihre Geschicklichkeit und Thätigkeit in Handarbeiten ist bewunderungswürdig.

Die Wichtigkeit und Ausdehnung des Handels der Stadt ist weltbekannt; ungeheure Karawanen, deren manche über 2000 Kameele stark sind, kommen und gehen täglich in unaufhörlichem Wechsel von und nach allen Richtungen; man hat mir versichert, daß jährlich zweimal sogar eine Karawane von mehr als 6000 Kameelen nach Damascus ziehe. Der Handel mit Indien ist größtentheils in den Händen der Juden, die in Calcutta, Bombay, Singapore und selbst in Canton Fabriken besitzen. — Die bedeutendsten Handelsartikel aus diesen Ländern sind: Indigo, Gewürze, Seidenstoffe, einige Arten seltener Früchte und Farbenartikel, die aus verschiedenen Provinzen von China kommen. Aus

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Persien kommen hauptsächlich Teppiche, Shawls, Seide, Tombako (eine Art Taback), Weine, Mandeln ꝛc. Man erhält dort auch Edelsteine, Rubinen, Smaragde, Korallen, und von der Insel Rein im persischen Golf kommen schöne Perlen.

Die größeren Schiffe mit jüdischen Producten gehen nach Maskat, Abeschur und Bassora; in letzterer Stadt entladen sie und erwarten zur Weiterbeförderung kleinere Schiffe. Das Dampfboot zwischen Indien und Abeschur fährt nur alle sechs Monate.

Im Jahre 1841 wurde Bagdad von der Pest heimgesucht, die große Verheerungen anrichtete; viele Menschen starben und mehre Tausende zogen aus der Stadt fort. Ein zweites Unglück, von welchem die Sadt in demselben Jahre betroffen wurde, war eine Ueberschwemmung des Tigris, wobei viele Häuser untergingen oder zerstört wurden.

Die Häuser sind nach der im Orient herrschenden Sitte stets verschlossen. Klopft ein Fremder an eine Thür und eine Frau öffnet ihm, so wendet sie sich sofort um, verbirgt ihr Gesicht und eilt schüchtern davon. Nach arabischer Bauart haben die Häuser in ihrer Mitte einen Hof, um welchen herum sich die Wohnungen befinden. Unten ist die Küche und in der ersten Etage wohnen die Frauen. Ein Fremder kann Monate lang in einem Hause wohnen, ohne die weiblichen Hausgenossen zu sehen, (wie bei den Muselmanen). Sobald man jedoch bekannt ist, wird man familiär behandelt. Alles Umganges und aller Unterhaltung beraubt, haben die Frauen keine Kenntniß von freiem und gesellschaftlichem Anstande; sie kennen nichts, was ihre Leidenschaften zügeln kann und ergeben sich leicht, wem sie können mit allen Ausbrüchen ihres glühenden Temperaments. Sobald sie auf der Straße erscheinen, sind sie in einen langen Schleier gehüllt, nur die funkelnden Augen blitzen darunter hervor und schauen keck auf den Vorübergehenden.

Eines Tages hatte ich eine Unterhaltung mit mehren angesehenen Herren, wobei ich auch gefragt wurde, ob es denn wahr sei, daß die Frauen in Europa frei seien und sich unverschleiert öffentlich zeigten. Auf meine bejahende Antwort erklärten sie mir, es sei die Bestimmung der Töchter Eva's ein eingezogenes Leben zu führen, und ihr Antlitz müsse vor fremden Personen, namentlich Männern, verhüllt werden. Ich sagte darauf: „Die Bibel

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ſpricht von einer verſchleierten Frau, doch Juda, der Sohn Jacob's, nahm ſie für eine Buhlerin.“[1] — Das Wort war hart, wenngleich der Bibel entlehnt, die meine Begleiter genau kannten, ſonſt hätte ich zu viel gewagt. Doch was liegt daran, daß die Frauen das Antlitz bedecken, wenn die Geſtalt unbedeckt iſt. Der Leſer wird mir nachſichtig meine bibliſchen Andeutungen verzeihen, ſo wie meine Zuhörer Nachſicht hatten. Ich führe noch an, was mir dort bei dieſer Gelegenheit erzählt wurde, daß namentlich eine Frau, die einen Hof ſäuberte und nur das unentbehrlichſte Kleidungsſtück trug, beim Anblick eines Fremden, der in die Thür trat, dieſes einzige Gewand über den Kopf ſchlug, um das Geſicht zu verhüllen. — Bei derartigen Unterhaltungen iſt es ſtets am beſten, ſeine Beweisgründe auf die Bibel zu ſtützen, gegen deren Autorität kein Widerſpruch ſtattfindet, die aber leider nicht recht verſtanden wird.

Eine Stunde von Bagdad erhebt ſich ein kleines, von acht rieſigen Dattelbäumen beſchattetes Gebäude; es hat zwei Abtheilungen, in deren einer ſich das reichgeſchmückte Grab des Hohenprieſters[2] Joſua befindet, deſſen Zacharias erwähnt.[3] Unter dem Katafalk liegen mehre alte Manuſcripte, aus welchen bei dem Grabe vorgeleſen wird; ſie enthalten eine Erzählung ſeiner Ge-

[1] 1. Buch Moſes Cap. 38, V. 15.

[2] Kayſerling, P. Teixeira: In einer kleinen Entfernung von Bagdad fand Teixeira in einer kleinen Hütte ein Grab, dem Mauren und Juden große Verehrung erwieſen. Sie ſagen, daß dort der Körper eines jüdiſchen Hohenprieſters ruhe. Es iſt ein großes aus Stein und Kalk gebautes Grabmal. Oben am Katafalk befindet ſich eine Meſſingplatte, auf welcher mit hebräiſchen Buchſtaben geſchrieben ſteht: Jesuah Kohen Gadol. Die Bewohner der Gegend behaupten, daß er ein heiliger Mann geweſen, und Alle verehren ihn als ſolchen wegen der Wunder, die, wie ſie verſichern, Gott durch ihn vollführt habe.*)

[3] Zacharias Cap. 3, V. 1.

* Teix. 124: Fuera de aquella parte de la ciudad esta recogida en una pequenna casa una sepultura tenida de Moros y Judios en grande veneracion, en la quel dizen està depositado el cuerpo de un summo sacerdote Hebreo. El tumulo es como una grande caxa de piedra y cal, y en la cabeçera tiene una lamina de cobre, con unas letras de relieuo en Hebrayco que dizen: Yehsuah Kohen Gadoh (l) que se Josuah summa sacerdote, dizen que fue varon santo, y todos lo reuerencian como tal, por milagros que affirman ha Dios hecho por el.

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schichte, die sich schon im Propheten Zacharias befindet. Das Innere des Grabgewölbes ist durch ein langes schmales Fenster erleuchtet. Die Juden begeben sich jeden Monat dorthin, um die Vorlesung der Schriften des Hohenpriesters zu halten; nach Beendigung derselben stimmen sie Hymnen an und vereinigen sich hierauf in einiger Entfernung von diesem Monumente zur fröhlichen Unterhaltung.

Die Ruinen von Babylon. — Hillah.

Die Ruinen von Babylon beginnen $2^1/_2$ Tagereise nordwestlich von Bagdad und erstrecken sich längs des Euphrat bis zu der sechs Stunden entfernten Stadt Hillah.[1] Die ganze Gegend, wo sich einst die alte berühmte Stadt Babylon erhob, ist eine große, traurige Oede, nur von einigen elenden Pflanzungen neben den Zelten der Beduinen belebt.

Welch tiefes religiöses Gefühl muß sich nicht eines Jeden bemächtigen, wenn er diese großartigen Trümmermassen erblickt, diese halb zerfallenen Paläste, Monumente, Säulen und Gebäude, die selbst als Ruinen noch an ihre vergangene Größe erinnern. Man findet noch heute mancherlei kostbare Gegenstände unter diesen Trümmern, antike Vasen, so wie Gold- und Silbermünzen. Ich selbst hatte mir vier Münzstücke angeeignet, die mir indeß mit andern Sachen geraubt wurden.

Man zeigt in der Nähe eine Grube, von welcher behauptet wird, es sei diejenige, in welche Daniel zu den Löwen geworfen wurde, so wie auch den Platz, wo sich der Kalkofen befunden

[1] Kayserling, P. Teixeira: Nicht weit von Hela betrat er den Boden Mesopotamiens. Von fern erblickte er die Ruinen des alten Babylon, „und dieser Ort wird von allen in der Gegend am seltensten besucht; eine Erfüllung dessen, was der Prophet darüber verkündet hat.“ *

* Teix. 111: es el lugar menos frequentado de toda aquella region, en complimiento de lo que della estana prophetizado. (Jesaias 14, 19. 20 ff.)

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haben soll, in welchen Nebukadnezar die Propheten Ananias, Misael und Asarias werfen ließ. Ebenso zeigt man den ehemaligen Wohnplatz dieses Königs und die angebliche Wohnung Daniels. Im Innern der sogenannten Danielsgrube sprudelt jetzt eine Quelle, die bei den Juden und Arabern in großer Verehrung steht, da ihr wunderbares Wasser Fieberkranke heilen soll. Auch findet man dort eine alte Linde, welche von den Bewohnern besonders verehrt wird, da sie der Sage nach von Nebukadnezar angebetet wurde. Früher theilte sich dieser Baum in drei Aeste, deren einen, wie mir erzählt wurde, ein englischer Lord absägen ließ, eine Entweihung, welche unter der arabischen Bevölkerung eine förmliche Empörung hervorrief und sowohl dem Lord wie dem englischen Consul theuer zu stehen kam.

Sechs Stunden in südwestlicher Richtung von den Ruinen Babylons erhebt sich eine riesig große Trümmermasse; es ist das weltberühmte Werk übermüthiger Menschen, der bekannte, in der Bibel beschriebene babylonische Thurm.[1] Ich hätte gern die Trümmer dieses Riesenbaues in Augenschein genommen, es fehlte mir jedoch an den nöthigen Mitteln, um eine starke Escorte miethen zu können, ohne welche man sich nicht dorthin wagen darf, da Räuberbanden und reißende Thiere in diesen Ruinen hausen.

Der Aussage der Landesbewohner zufolge gebraucht man drei Tage, um die Ueberreste des babylonischen Thurmes besichtigen zu können, unter denen man noch wohlerhaltene Säle und Grabmale findet. Sie sind nach den Berichten der Juden und Araber 1450 Fuß breit, und von so ungeheurer Größe, daß sie sich vom höchsten Punkte in einer Ausdehnung von zwanzig Stunden im Umkreise erstrecken. Mehre Treppen führen zu ihrer Höhe hinauf.

Etwa drei Tagereisen von Bagdad liegt am rechten Ufer des Euphrat die Stadt Hillah.[2] Es wohnen dort etwa 50 jüdische Familien, deren Nassi Mailum Mardochai ist. Die kleine Ge-

[1] Pethachia S. 191 spricht ebenfalls von diesem Thurme.

[2] Kayserling, P. Teixeira: Nicht weit von Merat-Ocem setzte Teixeira über den Euphrat, betrat Mesopotamien und die alten Orte geschichtlicher Erinnerung seiner Stammesgenossen. — Zuerst gedenkt er der Stadt

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meinde ist im Besitz einer Synagoge.[1] Es werden in Hillah verschiedene Stoffe gefertigt, die im Lande selbst gebraucht werden, auch ist die Stadt deshalb bekannt, weil dort die besten arabischen Pferde gezogen werden.

Von Hillah nach Kabur-Kefil sind etwa sechs Wegstunden. Nahe vor letzterem Orte fand ich mitten in der Wüste auf einem Hügel eine kleine thurmartige Pyramide. Sie ist gewölbt und enthält ein unterirdisches Gemach, welches in eine Grotte führt. Dieser Thurm, der von den Arabern Birs Nimrod genannt wird, ist vom höchsten Alter und soll der Sage nach dem Jäger Nimrod gehört haben und von ihm bewohnt worden sein.

Hela*, von Tudela Chila und Hillah genannt**, den Ort, welchen die Kinder Israel passirten, als sie nach Babylon gefangen abgeführt wurden. Die an dem Euphrat gelegenen Felder dieser Gegend sind sämmtlich von kleinen Flüßchen durchschnitten, „das waren die Flüsse, deren der Psalmist in seinem Stufengesange Erwähnung thut.*** Teixeira hielt sich an diesem Orte nicht auf und spricht nicht von den Juden, von denen Benjamin von Tudela dort 10,000 fand.

[1] Benjamin de Tudela S. 65 spricht von 10,000 Juden und 4 Synagogen. Auch erwähnt er bei einigen anderen Städten, welche wir weiter unten anführen, einer Bevölkerung von mehren tausend Juden, von denen jetzt keine Spur mehr zu finden ist.

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* Teixeira 111: por do los hijos de Israel passaron cautivos para Babilonia. Wohl wären wir geneigt, das alte Halach (2. Könige 17, 6; 18, 11), Helach, für Hela-Hillah zu halten. Ob Teixeira hier eine traditionelle, von den Einwohnern in Erfahrung gebrachte Nachricht berichtet, giebt er nicht an; jedenfalls stimmt sie mit der Erzählung der heiligen Schrift überein, da es auch 2. Könige 18, 11 heißt: „wajanchem ba — Halach" und er führte sie durch ꝛc. Von der Lage Halach's, welches (nach Gesenius) mit Helach (1. B. Mos. 10, 11) identisch ist, waren die Talmudisten genau unterrichtet und stimmen mit unserem Reiseberichte überein. Talmud babli, Joma 10*a* heißt es: Helach su Phrat d'bursif (Helach ist die Euphrat-Gegend bei Bursif). Nun ist bekanntlich Bursif (Borsippa) identisch mit Babel (Succa 34*a*, Sanhedrin 109*a*) und demnach erwiesen, daß Halach an der Stelle des heutigen Hela oder Hillah lag.

** Benjamin von Tudela 65.

*** Ibid 111: aquellos heran los Rios de que el Psalmista haze mencion su Psalmo. (Psalm 137.)

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Capitel 16.

Kabur-Kefil.

Grab des Propheten Hesekiel. Pilgerfahrten zu demselben. — Vermächtniß des Königs Jehojachin. — Die Gräber der Könige Sitkejahu und Jehojachin. — Siftik. — Mesched Ali.

Die Stadt Kabur-Kefil liegt in der Nähe des Euphrat, einige Stunden von den Ruinen von Babylon. „Kefil" heißt im Arabischen und Türkischen „Bürgschaft", und dieser Name der Stadt rührt von einem denkwürdigen Ereignisse, nämlich daher, daß der Prophet Hesekiel hier als Bürge für die an dem Orte wohnenden Juden in dem Augenblicke auftrat, wo gegen dieselben in Folge von Verleumdungen eine Verfolgung ausbrach. Noch in heutiger Zeit behandeln die dort wohnenden Araber unsere Glaubensbrüder sehr rücksichtsvoll.

Die Stadt bietet den Anblick einer unregelmäßigen Masse von Gemäuer dar und ist heute ausschließlich von Arabern und einem ihrer Stämme, den Hindu's, bewohnt.

Es befindet sich in der Stadt ein von einer Mauer umschlossenes Gebäude, in dessen Innern das Grab des Propheten Hesekiel liegt, welches mit kostbaren Teppichen und verschiedenen reichen Stickereien bedeckt ist. Der Berechnung des Seder Hadoroth zufolge starb der Prophet während der Regierung Nebukadnezar's, dessen Gefangener der König Jehojachin von Juda war. Das Grab lag zwischen den Flüssen Euphrat und Kábar, hatte aber damals keine Mauer. Nach Nebukadnezar's Tode folgte ihm sein Sohn Evil Merodach in der Regierung. Dieser bewilligte nicht allein seinem königlichen Gefangenen die Freiheit, sondern er beschenkte ihn auch mit Ländereien und Weinbergen in der Umgegend.[1]

[1] Jeremias Cap. 52, V. 31.

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Jehojachin nahm, nachdem er seine Freiheit wieder erlangt hatte, mehre tausend Juden und begann mit ihnen die oben erwähnte Mauer zu errichten.[1] Er ließ sie wie eine Festung mit Thürmen versehen, deren größter mit einer Gallerie umgeben, als Fundament zu einem einer Moschee ähnlichen Gebäude dient. Eine hohe Wendeltreppe im Innern führt zur Spitze dieses Thurmes, von wo aus man ganz deutlich mit unbewaffnetem Auge den babylonischen Thurm wie einen dunklen Riesen sich in der Ferne erheben sieht. Der Thurm hat eine eigenthümliche Vorrichtung, die bei den Landesbewohnern den Glauben an etwas wunderbares und übernatürliches erweckt. Es zieht sich nämlich durch denselben ein hölzerner Balken oder Pfahl, dessen beide Enden nach der Gallerie auslaufen. Wenn man nun mit Kraft diesen Balken nach sich zieht, so entsteht dadurch eine schwankende Bewegung des ganzen obern Theils des Thurmes. Nach dem Glauben der Bewohner muß man dazu als Zauberspruch die Worte sprechen: Beschem Malka Schalum wa Atharatho (im Namen König Salomo's und seiner Krone), vergißt man dies zu thun, so können die schlimmsten Folgen daraus entstehen. Ich versuchte vergebens meinen Glaubensbrüdern die natürliche Ursache dieses angeblichen Wunders zu erklären, das wahrscheinlich in einer versteckten Springfeder oder einem sonstigen Mechanismus liegt, vermochte es aber nicht, sie von ihrem Wunderglauben abzubringen.

An diesem Platze befindet sich das Grab des Propheten[2], auf welchem ein großer Steinkasten errichtet ist, der wie das ganze Gebäude mit Kalk übertüncht ist. Zur Seite des Grabes steht

[1] Seder Hadoroth.

[2] Kayserling, P. Teixeira: Ungefähr eine halbe Tagereise von dieser Stadt erblickte Teixeira „eine große Hütte mit einem hohen Thurme. Dort befindet sich das Grab und der Körper des heiligen Propheten Ezechiel, welcher von Mauren und Juden Ezkehl — J'chesthel — genannt und von Allen in großer Verehrung gehalten wird."*

* Teix. 102: una casa grande con una alta torre, adó esta la sepultura y cuerpo del santo Propheta Ezechiel, à quien Moros y Judios llaman Ezkhel, tenida de todos en suma veneracion, tanto por su vida y santidad, como por los milagros que affirman obra Dios alli por su sieruo. — Dieses Grab beschreiben außer Benjamin de Tudela (66 ff.) nach Asher (l. c. II. 141), Pethachia, Charisi, Niebuhr.

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eine große Synagoge, deren Außenseiten mit einem schönen die Schildkrötenfarbe nachahmenden Firniß überstrichen ist. Im Innern ist die Jerusalem zugewandte Seite ganz nackt und unvollendet als Zeichen der Trauer an den heiligen Tempel in der Stadt des Ewigen und an das Fragment seiner Mauer erinnernd. Durch eine in diesem Heiligthum befindliche Thür gelangt man in das Grab des Propheten.

An einer der Wände des Gebäudes bemerkt man etwa in Mannshöhe zwei Figuren, die in grauer Vorzeit gemalt, durch die Länge der Zeit größtentheils verwischt sind, es sollen nach der Behauptung der Juden die Bilder des Propheten Hesekiel und des Königs Jehojachin sein. Man erkennt nur sehr unsicher aus den abgerissenen Linien einige Aehnlichkeit mit menschlichen Formen in diesen Bildern, die Form der Gewandung und die Farben sind jedoch gar nicht mehr zu sehen. Ebenso ist die ganze Mauer an der Eingangspforte an verschiedenen Stellen mit einer Masse von Figuren versehen, etwa wie die Inschriften und Verzierungen der alten Egypter; sie sollen eine Erinnerung an die Erbauer des Gebäudes sein, an ein ganzes Volk, welches dasselbe mit seinem Könige ausführte.

Nach der Behauptung der Landesbewohner soll dies die einzige Synagoge sein, die auf den Befehl eines Königs von Juda errichtet, und deren materielle Ausführung durch ihn selbst befördert wurde. Die heiligen und andere Schriften bemerken dies nicht immer; ich werde später noch mehrer anderer Synagogen erwähnen, die man in dieser Provinz oder in deren Nähe auf den Gräbern der Könige von Juda findet, doch war es mir unmöglich materielle Beweise dafür zu erhalten, ob diese Monumente auf Anordnung dieser Könige gebaut worden sind.

Im heiligen Schrein dieser Synagoge bewahrt man verschiedene Gesetzesrollen, unter denen sich namentlich eine von so außerordentlicher Größe befindet, wie ich sie niemals gesehen. Sie ist auf einer Art Pergament, welches man Gewil nennt, geschrieben und soll nach Behauptung der Landesbewohner von der eigenen Hand Hesekiels herrühren.[1]

[1] Benjamin de Tudela S. 66, 67 spricht ebenfalls von diesem Pentateuch

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Ich hege darüber eine andere Meinung. Nach vielen Nachforschungen, die ich am Orte selbst angestellt, und nachdem ich mich mit den Chachamim des Landes berathen, bin ich zu der Ueberzeugung gelangt, daß dieser Pentateuch von dem Rabbi Anan geschrieben ist, der zur Zeit der großen Gaonim um das Jahr 4490 lebte, wie im Werke Raawed berichtet wird. Dieser Rabbi nahm unter den Gaonim keinen Rang ein, wandte sich deshalb zum Schisma und wurde Stifter der Secte der Karaiten, welche von den Juden Karahim d. i. Anhänger des Worts, des todten Buchstabens der Bibel (von dem hebräischen Kera, lesen) genannt werden. Er zog eine große Menge Israeliten zu seiner Secte. Diese Angabe findet man auch in dem Werke des Herrn Abbé Bargès, Professor der orientalischen Sprachen an der Sorbonne in Paris bestätigt, welches den Titel trägt: „Japhet ben Zeli Bassorensis Caraïtae in librorum psalmorum commentarii Arabici.“ Der gelehrte Verfasser, der mir ein Exemplar seines Werkes zum Geschenke machte, erklärt ebenfalls den Namen Caraïtae durch „Leser oder Schreiber, die Söhne oder Vermittler der heiligen Schrift.“

Dieser Pentateuch wird nur am Jomkipur (Versöhnungstage) benutzt, und alle meine Bitten, das Manuscript untersuchen zu dürfen, waren erfolglos, da man es nur an dem oben erwähnten Tage lesen kann.

Im Innern der Synagoge befindet sich ein besonderes Gemach, welches stets verschlossen, von den Juden selbst niemals betreten wird, und deshalb auch für keinen Andern zugänglich ist. Es ist eine sogenannte Genisa[1] (ein Verwahrungsort der alten

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und dem Grabe des Propheten Hesekiel, aber er nennt den Namen des Ortes nicht. Ebenso sagt er, daß sich die Juden von Neujahr bis zum Versöhnungstage dort versammeln, was indeß jetzt zu einer ganz andern Zeit geschieht, wie wir erwähnen werden. Er erzählt auch von sechszig Thürmen und vier Synagogen, ich habe jedoch nur einen Thurm und eine Synagoge gefunden. — Pethachia S. 179 spricht ebenfalls von diesem Grabe des Propheten, nennt jedoch den Ort nicht. Er erzählt auch, wie Tudela, daß sich die Juden von Neujahr bis zum Versöhnungstage dort versammeln; von dem Pentateuch erwähnt er nichts.

[1] Die Juden im Orient und in Afrika haben noch den Gebrauch, daß sie

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Schriften), in welcher alte Manuscripte aufbewahrt werden, die, wie man sagt, aus alten Zeiten und von verschiedenen Orten herrühren. Dieser Aufbewahrungsort alter Reliquien steht bei allen Glaubensbrüdern in großer Verehrung.[1]

Neben der Synagoge und dem Grabe des Propheten ist eine Jeschiba errichtet, in welcher die Chachamim, zuweilen zwanzig an der Zahl, fortwährend zu frommem Lesen und zum Studium des Talmud und anderer Gesetzbücher vereinigt sind. Sie sind die einzigen Juden, die in Kabur-Kefil einen bleibenden Wohnsitz haben. Ihre reichen Brüder in Bagdad versehen sie mit allem Nöthigen zu ihrem Unterhalt und zu dem dieser Stiftung, welche durch große Geschenke und Vermächtnisse fundirt ist. Wenige Jahre vor meiner Anwesenheit hatte z. B. ein reicher jüdischer Kaufmann in Bagdad, Namens Jacob Zemach, der ohne Hinterlassung männlicher Erben gestorben war, sein ganzes Vermögen zu Wohlthaten für seine Glaubensbrüder in Palästina und auch 150,000 Karan (1 Karan = 5 Piaster) für die Erhaltung der Jeschiba in Kabur-Kefil vermacht. Diese frommen und wißbegierigen Einsiedler, in deren Familie der Name „Diener des Propheten" erblich und die von allen Steuern befreit ist, werden von drei Arabern bedient.

Die Juden sowohl wie die Araber in der Umgegend hegen einen besonders festen Glauben an die Wirksamkeit gewisser Handlungen, zu deren Schutze man das Grab des Propheten Hesekiel anruft, namentlich zu Gunsten der Kranken, die nicht für ganz unheilbar gehalten werden. — Wer aber kennt den Willen des Ewigen? — Diese Frage konnte mir niemand beantworten.

Jeden Freitag Nachmittag gehen die oben erwähnten Chachamim zum Grabe des Propheten, singen dort Hymnen und fromme Lieder und wechseln die Teppiche, mit denen der Katafalk bedeckt ist. Auch die Juden der umliegenden Provinzen pilgern hierher. Zur Zeit des Wochenfestes kommen in jedem Jahre viele fromme

zerrissene und abgenutzte Bücher und Manuscripte und unleserlich gewordene Pentateuche an einem besonderen Orte aufbewahren, und sie alle zwei oder drei Jahre auf dem Kirchhofe begraben. Man setzt darüber einen Stein mit der Inschrift „Genisa". Es wird dabei ein Fest gefeiert.

[1] Benjamin de Tudela spricht S. 67 von dieser Genisa.

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Wallfahrer aus Bagdad und Baſſora, aus Perſien und andern Ländern, ohne Unterſchied des Ranges und des Geſchlechts, zur Feier des Feſtes nach Kabur-Keſil. Zahlreiche Ceremonien kommen bei der Feſtlichkeit vor. Am erſten Feſtabend gehen die Männer zur Synagoge und leſen dort das Buch des Propheten Heſekiel. Eine Stunde vor Tagesanbruch wird an den Meiſtbietenden die Gunſt verkauft, die alten Decken durch neue zu erſetzen, ſo wie die Hafthora[1] des Tages vor dem Grabe des Propheten laut vorzuleſen. Nur die erſte dieſer Verrichtungen kann durch mehre Fromme vollführt werden; der Ertrag dieſes Vorrechts überſteigt oft die Summe von 10,000 Piaſtern. Nachdem dies geordnet iſt, ſchreitet man zum Wechſel der Draperien, der unter den Geſängen der Verſammlung vollzogen wird, Geſänge, deren Schönheit und Harmonie, ſo wie die Einigkeit, mit welcher dieſe erhabene Ceremonie ausgeführt wird, meine Bewunderung erregt haben. In den Pauſen, von welchen die Feierlichkeit unterbrochen wird, werden Hymnen geſungen. Dies währt drei Stunden und eben ſo lange dauert die Hafthora. Während der ganzen Feierlichkeit ſind die Frauen in der Synagoge zugegen, um andachtsvoll dem Geſange der für dieſes Feſt beſonders gedichteten Hymnen zuzuhören.

Soll ich jetzt von den Tauſenden mehr oder minder fabelhaften Erzählungen berichten, die mir über die verſchiedenen Wunder und merkwürdigen Thaten mitgetheilt wurden, welche bei dem Grabe des Propheten geſchehen ſind? Der Leſer möge mir geſtatten darüber zu ſchweigen, ich würde nichts für ihn Intereſſantes berichten können.

Auch die nomadiſchen Araber der Wüſte kommen in wahrem Glauben zu dem Grabe des Propheten und küſſen voll tiefer Ehrfurcht den Katafalk. Sie bieten den Chachamim des Ortes Geſchenke, um durch ihre Vermittlung die Gnade des Propheten zu erlangen.

König Jehojachin vermachte nach ſeiner Befreiung aus der Gefangenſchaft zur Erhaltung dieſer Gebäude einen großen Theil der Ländereien und der Weinberge, welche er dem Edelmuthe des

[1] Ein Abſchnitt aus den Propheten.

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Königs von Babylon verdankte. Diese Institution besteht noch heute, und selbst der von den Persern als Prophet verehrte Ali, ein Verwandter Mahomeds, hat die Einrichtung, als er in diese Länder kam, um Anhänger für seine neue Religion zu erwerben, in ihrer ganzen Ausdehnung bestehen lassen.

Bei meiner Rückkehr in diese Länder (Ende 1850) hörte ich, daß die Araberstämme der Hindus in Verbindung mit anderen Arabern dem Pascha von Bagdad die Steuern verweigert hatten. Der Pascha sandte Truppen, um sie zu zwingen, die jedoch ihrer geringen Zahl wegen von den Aufrührern mit Verlust zurückgeschlagen wurden und sich in die Stadt des Propheten Hesekiel zurückzogen. Die Araber wagten es nicht, sie dorthin zu verfolgen oder auf sie zu schießen, aus Furcht, eine Entweihung des Heiligthums zu begehen. Dadurch gewann die kleine Schaar Zeit, Hülfe aus Bagdad zu erwarten, nach deren Ankunft die Rebellen von allen Seiten angegriffen, zur Unterwerfung und Zahlung der Abgaben gezwungen wurden. Ich war während dieser Ereignisse in Bagdad. Die Achtung vor dem Propheten wirkt so mächtig auf den Geist der barbarischen Völker dieser Gegenden, welche die kräftigsten und muthigsten Kämpfer zu den vielen Räuberhorden stellen, daß die Chachamim von Kabur-Kefil niemals den geringsten Ueberfall von denselben zu befürchten haben, ja sogar gegen andere Räuber von ihnen beschützt werden.

Die in der Nähe von Kabur-Kefil befindlichen Gräber des Königs Sitkejahu, des Propheten Zephania und mehrer Glieder der Familie David's, so wie Siftif mit seiner alterthümlichen Synagoge führt Benjamin de Tudela (S. 68. 69) an, worauf ich hinweise. Die Juden aber, welche er seiner Zeit in diesen Orten in großer Zahl vorfand, sind heute nicht mehr zu finden, sondern nur wenige zerstreute und vereinzelte.

Mesched Ali. — Kelbella.

Von Kabur-Kefil zog ich nach dem 6 Stunden entfernten **Mesched-Ali.**

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In der Stadt Meſched Ali[1] befindet ſich das Grab des oben erwähnten Ali, des Stifters einer namentlich in Perſien ſehr verbreiteten muſelmaniſchen Secte. — Ueber dem Grabe erhebt

[1] Kayſerling, P. Teixeira: Sein nächſtes Reiſeziel war Bagdad. Da er zu dieſer Zeit den Tigris nicht befahren konnte, ſo entſchloß er ſich, ſeinen Weg durch die ſyriſch-arabiſche Wüſte zu nehmen. Als Hauptperſon ſeiner Caſila oder Karawane ſchildert er einen zum Islam übergetretenen Juden, in welchen die in dieſer Gegend handeltreibenden Portugieſen und Venetianer viel Vertrauen ſetzten. Am 2. September ſetzte ſich die Karawane in Bewegung. Intereſſant iſt die Schilderung, welche Teixeira von dieſem Zuge durch die Wüſte entwirft. Schon am zweiten Tage der Wanderung erblickte er zu ſeiner Rechten einen Berg, welchen die Araber Gibel Sinai (Berg Sina) nannten und in deſſen Nähe die Eingebornen das alte Baſſora verlegten.* Die Beſchwerden einer Wüſtenreiſe blieben auch bei ihm nicht aus; bald war es der böſe Simum, welcher ihn beläſtigte, bald der brennende Durſt, von dem er in dieſen waſſerarmen Gegenden ſo häufig gequält wurde. Groß war ſeine Freude, als er endlich in Reamelah, wie die Araber den Ort nennen, ſeinen Durſt löſchen konnte. Von ſeinen Wanderungen durch die Wüſte dürfen wir hier nichts weiter mittheilen, ſo wir das uns geſteckte Ziel nicht überſchreiten wollen. Nur das eine ſei noch bemerkt, daß ſich mit Teixeira Juden bei der Karawane befunden haben, welche, wie er erzählt, ſich am Freitag von der Geſellſchaft trennten, weil ſie am Sabbath nicht reiſen wollten.** Nach mehrwöchentlicher Wanderung näherte er ſich dem Gebiete von Meyat-Aly oder Mam-Aly, oder Meſched- oder Imam-Ali.† An einem Sabbathe betrat er die zur Zeit Ali's gegründete Stadt. Hier wurde auch der mehre Wochen auf einem in der Wüſte irrenden Kameele gebundene Leichnam des Stifters der mächtigen mahomedaniſchen Secte,

* Auch Pethachia, der Reiſende aus Regensburg, nennt (78) einen Berg Sinai, welcher ſich in der Nähe Bagdads befindet und mit dem heiligen Berge gleichen Namens eine Kette bilden ſoll.

** Teixeira 94: quedando alli los Judios, por que el dia siguiente hera Sabado y no podian caminar.

Nach dem Geſetze iſt es den Juden der ſich ausſetzenden Lebensgefahr wegen erlaubt, am Sabbath mit einer Karawane zu reiſen. (Codex Orach. Chajim. Dubna 1822. S. 262, Art. 248, B. 4.) Man erzählte mir von einem Reiſenden, der aus Rigoroſität an einem Freitage die Karawane verließ und, mit Reiſetaſche und Teppich verſehen, in ein Wäldchen ging, um dort ſeinen Sabbath zu feiern — es war ſein letzter. Alle Nachforſchungen über das Verbleiben des Juden waren vergebens, man hat nie eine Kunde von ihm erhalten. — Ich glaube, daß dieſe Reiſenden Caraiten waren, die die Bibel buchſtäblich nehmen. (2. Buch Moſes Cap. 16, V. 29.)

† Ibid 99: Mexat Aly o Mam Aly que todo es uno, y quiere dezir Mesquita o casa de oracion de Aly.

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sich eine große Moschee von weißem Marmor, deren Kuppel aus vergoldeten Silberplatten mit einer massiv goldenen Spitze besteht. Um die Moschee herum ist ein Kirchhof angelegt, auf welchem sich die reichsten Muselmanen aus Persien bis zu einer Entfernung von 30 Tagereisen begraben lassen, um an dem Orte zu ruhen, der durch das Grab ihres Propheten geheiligt ist. Die einbalsamirten Leichname werden in dicht verschlossenen Särgen auf Maulthieren transportirt; für jede solche Leiche, welche an Bagdad vorbeigebracht wird, muß dort ein Tuman (persische Goldmünze von 55 Piaster) bezahlt werden. Die Seelen der Todten sollen durch ihren Propheten direct in den Himmel eingeführt werden.

Unfern von Mesched Ali liegt die Stadt Kelbella, in welcher nur Perser wohnen. Die Bewohner zahlten früher keine Steuern, weil dieser Boden für heilig gehalten wurde, auch war der Eintritt in die Stadt den Juden und Christen verwehrt. Vor etwa neun Jahren zwang sie der Nasi Pascha von Bagdad zur Zahlung der Abgaben; sie widersetzten sich zwar, wurden jedoch geschlagen und flüchteten in die Moschee Ali's, wo sie Schutz zu finden dachten. Der Pascha aber ließ die Moschee beschießen, worauf sich die Aufrührer ergaben. Das halb zerstörte Gebäude wurde später wieder aufgebaut. Jetzt ist die Stadt besser bevölkert und für die Juden und Christen geöffnet.

Nachdem ich diese Orte besucht hatte, kehrte ich nach Bagdad zurück und schiffte mich October 1848 nach Bassora ein.

welche nach ihm Aliiten genannt werden, dem Schoße der Erde übergeben. Eine prächtige Moschee erhebt sich über das von den Arabern heilig gehaltene Grab. Die Bauart dieses bei dem Besuche Teixeira's schon der früheren inneren Pracht entbehrenden Tempels liefert Zeugniß von dem hohen Kunstsinn der Erbauer, wie das Innere selbst an die bekannte Freigebigkeit der Orientalen erinnert. Nicht wenig staunte der portugiesische Reisende über die im Tempel befindlichen drei großen Goldlampen, welche mit sehr werthvollen, von den verschiedenen Fürsten geweihten Edelsteinen besetzt waren.* Die Bewohner von Mesched Ali dulden weder Juden noch Christen, überhaupt Niemanden unter sich, der nicht zu ihrer Secte gehört, weil sie gegen Alle einen tödtlichen Haß hegen.**

* Teixeira, 199 ff.

** Ibid 101: no assienta en este pueblo Judio ni Christiano alguno, que ellos tienen a todos odio mortal.

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Capitel 17.

Von Bagdad nach Bassora. — Die Wüste El Ozeir (von den Arabern Deser Asar genannt).

Reise auf dem Tigris. — Der Vogel Debi-Kousch. — Das Grab Esra's in der Wüste El Ozeir. — Koath. — Suk-e-Schejuch. — Gumruk. — Gorna. — Bassora. — Mohamma. — Abeschur.

Ich hatte die Wahl zweier Wege, der eine zu Lande durch die Wüste, der andere den Tigris hinunter. Die Reise durch die Wüste ist der vielen Räuberbanden wegen eine zu gefahrvolle, ich entschloß mich deshalb zu der Fahrt auf dem Tigris, welche zwar länger dauert, aber doch bequemer und sicherer ist, obgleich auch hier manchmal die Araber an den Ufern lauern, die Schiffe entern, und Alles ausplündern. Ich schiffte mich auf einem der Segelboote ein, welche den Fluß befahren. — Man erzählte mir auf der Reise von einem außerordentlich großen Vogel, der den Namen Debi-Kousch trägt, den Karawanen nachzieht und sich vom Mist der Kameele, seiner Lieblingsspeise nährt, wonach er auch seinen Namen erhalten hat. Ich habe später selbst einen solchen Vogel gesehen, es schien mir der Strauß zu sein, obgleich er mir größer vorkam als der Strauß, den ich in Afrika gesehen habe. Er kann nicht fliegen, da er nur kurze Flügel hat, jedoch vermag er mit einem Schlage derselben einen Menschen zu tödten. Man fängt ihn jung und zähmt ihn dann.

Etwa eine Stunde weit in der Wüste bemerkten wir während der Fahrt einen großen viereckigen, nach oben spitz zulaufenden Thurm, zu dessen Innern vier Thore führen und an dessen Ecken große Steinblöcke von wohl 24 Fuß Höhe und 18 Fuß Breite liegen. Das Bauwerk ist seiner schönen Bildhauerarbeit wegen merkwürdig und soll nach den Angaben der Landesbewohner zur Zeit der ersten babylonischen Könige ausgeführt sein.

Drei Tagereisen von Bagdad den Tigris hinunter, mitten in der öden und wilden Wüste El Ozeir, erhebt sich am Ufer des

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Flusses ein großes viereckiges Gebäude, in welchem sich das Grab Esra's befindet. Das Gebäude ist von einigen kleineren Häusern umringt und enthält zwei ineinander führende geräumige Säle, von denen der erste den Muselmanen, der zweite mit dem Grabe den Juden angehört. Ein mattes Halbdunkel herrscht in dem Gemache, in welches ein gebrochenes Licht durch die Thür hineindringt. Man sieht darin einen Katafalk, der 16 Fuß lang, 10 Fuß hoch und 6 Fuß breit ist. Unleserlich gewordene Inschriften bedecken alle vier Seiten dieses Denkmals, über welches kostbare goldgestickte Teppiche ausgebreitet sind; vielfache reiche Verzierungen schmücken den Saal. Obgleich mitten in der Wüste und von arabischen Räuberstämmen umwohnt, hat man doch nichts für die Sicherheit dieser Kostbarkeiten zu fürchten, da sie durch die Verehrung, welche die Araber dem Grabe Esra's zollen, vor allen Angriffen geschützt sind, und der Sage nach kein Räuber das Heiligthum verlassen kann, ehe er das etwa Entwendete wieder an seinen Platz zurückgelegt hat.

Die Schiffe halten unweit des Grabes an und alle Reisende ohne Unterschied des Glaubens begeben sich dorthin, um zu beten. Der Fremde, der einige Tage in der Wüste zugebracht hat, kann sich einer tiefen religiösen Rührung nicht erwehren, wenn er mitten in der Oede dieses ehrwürdige Denkmal erblickt.

Das Grab Esra's war für mich ein Gegenstand wiederholter Untersuchungen, denn da die Bibel weder seinen Tod noch seinen Begräbnißort mittheilt, so hegte ich Zweifel über die Identität dieses Grabes. Ich habe mich jedoch aus dem Seder Hadoroth und aus anderen historischen Werken vollständig von derselben überzeugt. Sie berichten, daß Esra sich zum Könige Artasatha begeben habe, von welchem er Briefe erhielt, um einige Freiheiten für seine in Jerusalem wohnenden Brüder zu erflehen, und daß er in der Nähe von Babylon gestorben sei (auch die Bibel erwähnt den einen Theil dieser Angabe).[1] Der Begräbnißort ist im Seder Hadoroth nicht genau bezeichnet, ich halte mich deshalb an die Tradition, da ich nach den genauesten Forschungen nichts

[1] Esra Cap. 7, V. 11 ff.

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richtigeres gefunden habe.[1] Der Todestag Esra's wird im Selichot der portugiesischen Juden auf den 9. Theiwod (Januar) festgesetzt, der Seder Olam sagt, er sei gegen Anfang des Jahres 3500 nach biblischer Zeitrechnung gestorben.

Viele Juden von Bagdad und Bassora feiern bei dem Grabe Esra's das Wochenfest und nehmen an den frommen Ceremonien Theil. Die Araber kennen den Zweck dieser Wallfahrer und legen ihnen kein Hinderniß in den Weg.

Koath. — Suk-e-Schejuch. — Gumruk. — Gorna.

Nach abermaliger zweitägiger Wasserfahrt gelangte ich nach Koath (Kut-el-Amara). Zwölf Stunden von diesem Orte liegt der Marktflecken Suk-e-Schejuch, von den Arabern Sukasuk genannt, wohin man von Koath auf dem Kanal Scheh-Sah, der den Euphrat mit dem Tigris verbindet, gelangt. Es wohnen dort etwa vierzig Judenfamilien, die sich mit Handel beschäftigen und in erträglicher Lage leben. Ein Arm des Tigris theilt sich hier in mehre kleine Ströme, und wenige Stunden von da entfließt auch dem Euphrat ein Arm. Die Araber benutzen diese kleineren Ströme, um sie durch Gräben auf ihre Felder zur Bewässerung zu leiten, womit ich sie mehrfach beschäftigt sah. Der Tigris ist hier so ungestüm, daß er ganze Felsblöcke mit sich fortreißt, und in seinem reißenden Falle die Ufer überströmt. Die Bewohner der Ufer bauen vergebens Dämme, um seinen Ueberschwemmungen vorzubeugen und ihn in sein Bett einzuengen. Der Lauf des Flusses ist sehr veränderlich und seine vielfachen Krümmungen erschweren die Schifffahrt. — Die Gegend wird von zahlreichen kriegerischen Araberstämmen bewohnt, die fast sämmtlich unabhängig sind, obgleich der Scheik des Landes die Oberhoheit des

[1] Benjamin de Tudela, S. 73, spricht von dem Grabe Esra's. Er sagt, es liege am Flusse Samura an der persischen Grenze, und es wohnen dort viele Mahomedaner so wie 1500 Juden, welche vier Synagogen besäßen. Ich fand es in der Wüste. — Pethachia S. 192 verlegt es an die Grenze von Babylonien.

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Pascha von Bagdad dadurch anerkennt, daß er ihm zuweilen Geschenke sendet.

Fünf Stunden von dort liegt das Dorf Gumruk am Ufer des Euphrat. Das türkische Wort „Gumruk“ bedeutet „Steuer“, denn hier wird der Zoll erhoben. Von diesem Orte ab wird der Euphrat sehr breit, seine Ufer sind mit Bäumen bepflanzt und namentlich bilden die Palmen schon sehr ansehnliche Wäldchen.

Gorna liegt auf einer Art Halbinsel zwischen Euphrat und Tigris und ist von fruchtbaren Feldern und Bäumen umgeben. Zahlreiche Heerden weiden hier, besonders giebt es viele Büffel; die Milch ihrer Kühe ist so fett, daß sie innerhalb einer Stunde so fest wie Butter wird, wovon ich mich selbst überzeugte. Der Scheik erhebt hier einen Zoll von den Schiffen, die von Bagdad kommen. Nicht weit von Gorna fließen der Euphrat und Tigris in einen Strom zusammen, der dann den Namen Shat-el-Arab (Fluß der Araber) annimmt. Die Ufer sind mit Waldungen gekrönt und die Schifffahrt selbst wird sicherer, da hier die Wüste, das Gebiet der räuberischen Araberstämme, aufhört. Vom Zusammenfluß beider Ströme an wird ihr Gewässer breit und ruhig wie ein Landsee.

Bassora.

Die Stadt[1] ist ein bedeutender Handelsplatz, wo noch vor zwanzig Jahren fast 3000 Judenfamilien wohnten, die heute bis

[1] Kayserling, Pedro Teixeira: Nach einer Fahrt auf dem Tigris, von Indien aus, kam er am 14. April 1604 nach dem alten und festen Bassora. Die Stadt zeichnet sich besonders durch ihre Datteln aus, welche, wie Teixeira bemerkt, das Hauptnahrungsmittel der Bewohner dieser Gegend bilden und so gut und vorzüglich sind, daß jährlich eine große Quantität dieser Früchte nach Bagdad und persischen Städten ausgeführt wird. Teixeira fand die Stadt in einem jämmerlichen Zustande: acht oder zehn Tage vor seiner Ankunft hatte eine Pulverexplosion einen Theil derselben fast ganz zerstört und argen Schaden angerichtet.* Es ist überraschend,

* Teixeira, 77: ocho o diez dias antes de mi llegada hauia tomado fuego una casa de municiones y hauiendo tocado en la poluora, ardieron cinco mil y tantos ordres . . .

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auf 50 herabgekommen sind.[1] Eine verheerende Epidemie hat die Bevölkerung decimirt, so daß ein ganzer Theil der Stadt leer steht und die Häuser in Trümmer zerfallen. Mitten in diesen Ruinen stehen vier Synagogen, von welchen indeß drei unbenutzt und leer sind, da eine einzige für die kleine Gemeinde hinreicht. Die Juden leben hier sehr frei, sie sind alle wohlhabend, und manche unter ihnen treiben großartige Handelsgeschäfte; dabei sind sie gastfreundlich und mildthätig, doch ist ihre Bildung sehr vernachlässigt. Außer ihren Handelsgeschäften besitzen sie große Dattelpflanzungen, deren Ertrag der Gegenstand eines bedeutenden Erwerbs ist. Man versicherte mir dort, daß es 70 Sorten Datteln gebe; ich kenne deren zwölf.

Die Juden von Bassora, deren Nassi Rabbi Eliahu Gabai mich einst über einen Vorfall wegen einer Chalitza[2] zu Rathe ziehen wollte, haben eigenthümliche Gebräuche bei der Beerdigung ihrer Todten. Man trägt den Leichnam in einem offenen Sarge

daß er der Juden dieser Stadt nicht erwähnt, welche sich zur Zeit Benjamin's de Tudela auf 2000 beliefen.* Erwägen wir jedoch, daß die 3000 Judenfamilien, welche noch vor zwanzig Jahren dort wohnten, heute bis auf 50 herabgekommen sind, so ist immerhin möglich, daß ihre Zahl auch im Anfang des 17. Jahrhunderts zu unbedeutend war, als daß Teixeira davon hätte Notiz nehmen sollen.

In der Nähe dieser Stadt gewahrte er eine kleine Hütte, in welcher Eingeborne, Mauren, ihr Gebet verrichteten. Auf sein Befragen erfuhr er, daß diese Hütte dem Içá ben Mariam (Jesus, Sohn Maria's) geweiht sei.** Gleichzeitig theilten die Befragten ihm mit, daß sie den Stifter der christlichen Religion als Ruyalah (Geist Gottes) „espiracion de Dios", wie Teixeira erklärend hinzufügt, verehrten.*** Ohne Zweifel waren das Ueberbleibsel christlicher Gemeinden, welche zur Zeit des Urchristenthums sich dort gebildet hatten.

[1] Benjamin de Tudela spricht S. 73 davon und sagt, daß zu seiner Zeit dort 2000 Juden lebten. — Ritter's Erdkunde Th. 11, S. 1037 giebt nach Niebuhr 100 Judenfamilien an. Jetzt beschränkt sich ihre Zahl nach meiner obigen Angabe.

[2] 5. B. Moses Cap. 25, V. 9.

* Benjamin de Tudela (ed. Asher) 73.

** Teixeira 78: pergunteles que casa era aquella, respondieron me, que era dedicadà a Içá ben Mariam . . .

*** Ibid. . . . los Moros lo veneran mucho llamandole Ruyalah, que es espiracion de Dios. (Ruy das hebräische Ruach.)

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auf einer schwarzbehängten Bahre; unter Absingung von Grabgesängen schreitet der Zug zum Begräbnißplatze, wobei unterwegs siebenmal angehalten wird. Bei dem jedesmaligen Anhalten geht das Leichengefolge mit Gebet und Gesang um den Sarg herum und Jeder wirft ein Geldstück in eine auf der Leiche stehende Urne. Beim siebenten Anhaltspunkte erhebt der Chacham die Urne und spricht: „Wir wissen, daß Niemand auf der Welt frei ist von der Sünde Sera Lebathalah,[1] die Legionen von Nachtgedanken gebiert, welche nach dem Tode der Menschen kommen und sie reizen, unter dem Vorwande, daß sie ihre Kinder seien und Theil an dem väterlichen Erbe haben sollen. Deshalb geben wir dir dieses Geld, damit du nichts mehr von dem Verstorbenen oder seinen Kindern zu fordern hast und daß du seinen Leib und seine Seele in Frieden lassen mögest. Im Namen des Ewigen und seiner heiligen Thora und mit Zustimmung der anwesenden Gemeindemitglieder legen wir auf dich den Bannfluch, der dich zwingen wird, in die wilden und einsamen Gegenden zu flüchten, wo du Niemand mehr verfolgen kannst." Hierauf wird das gesammelte Geld fortgeworfen. Auf dem Begräbnißplatze angekommen, geht man um die Todtengrube siebenmal herum und kehrt dann zur Stadt zurück, nachdem man den Leichnam ins Grab gelegt. — Der Statthalter des Pascha von Bagdad, ein sehr höflicher und freundlicher Mann, verlangte mich zu sehen und nahm meinen Besuch sehr wohlwollend auf.

Die Bewohner von Bassora leiden an der Seuche des Aussatzes,[2] die namentlich zur Zeit der Dattelreife, im Monat August stark grassirt, wo fast Niemand von dieser Krankheit befreit bleibt. Die Symptome dieser Seuche bestehen darin, daß sich zuerst auf der Haut kleine bläuliche Geschwüre bilden, welche später in Grau übergehen, dann aufschwellen, sich über die ganze Haut verbreiten und sogar das Fleisch angreifen. Nach der Heilung läßt die Krankheit sichtbare Spuren, Narben, zurück. Die Juden benennen diese Seuche, die auch im Winter, jedoch in geringerem Grade vorkommt, mit dem biblischen Namen. Die vom sogenannten

[1] Nach einer kabbalistischen Annahme.

[2] Vergl. 3. B. Moses Cap. 13, V. 9 ff.

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weißen Aussatz Ergriffenen sind unheilbar, wie dies schon in der Bibel erwähnt ist.

In der Nähe von Bassora liegen vier große in Ruinen zerfallene Gebäude, welche nach der Landessage die Ställe König Salomo's gewesen sein sollen, was indeß sehr unwahrscheinlich ist.

Von Bassora fuhr ich auf dem Shat-el-Arab nach dem drei Tagereisen entfernten Mohammerah. Mit günstigem Winde dauert die Fahrt drei Stunden. Diese Stadt gehört zum persischen Gebiet und es wohnen keine Juden in derselben. Von hier aus setzt man die Reise auf dem Chor Bahmeschir, von den Arabern Shat Mohammerah[1] genannt, fort und gelangt nach dem zwei Tagereisen entfernten Dorfe Koi, welches den südlichsten Grenzpunkt der asiatischen Türkei bildet. Von dort aus gelangt man auf dem Shat-el-Arab nach Mohamma, wo sich der Fluß in mehren Mündungen in den persischen Golf ergießt.

Von Mohamma erreicht man in 24 Stunden Abeschur, von den Persern Bender Abeschur genannt.

Capitel 18.

Ostindien.

Die zehn Stämme, ihre Wanderung und Zerstreuung. — Citate und Beweise.

Von Abeschur brachte mich ein Dampfboot nach Bombay, wo ich nach einer Fahrt von zwanzig Tagen Anfangs Februar 1849 anlangte. Ich gehe über die Details meiner Reise und meines Besuches der wichtigsten Städte Hindostans hinweg, womit ich ein Jahr hinbrachte, und beschäftige mich hier nur mit dem Zweck meiner Wanderung, den verlorenen zehn Stämmen

[1] Benjamin de Tudela spricht S. 73 von einem Flusse Samura, es ist möglich, daß dies der Shat Mohammerah ist.

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Israels, den Bene-Israel. Es ist nothwendig, einen Blick auf die Geschichte ihrer Wanderungen zu werfen, wozu ich die Bibel als Führer benutze.

1) Unter der Regierung Menachem ben Gedi brach Pul, der König von Assyrien, ins Land, zog sich aber, durch eine Kriegssteuer von 1000 Centner Silber bewogen, wieder zurück. (2. B. der Könige Cap. 16, V. 19.) Dagegen finden wir im 1. Buche der Chronica Cap. 5, V. 26, daß die assyrischen Könige Pul und Tiglath Pilesser die Stämme Ruben, Gad und den halben Stamm Manasse in die Gefangenschaft nach Chalach, Chabor, Hara und an die Ufer des Flusses Gosen (Ganges) geführt haben.

2) Unter Peckach ben Remaljahu vertrieb Tiglath Pilesser, König von Assyrien, die Einwohner mehrer israelitischen Städte, worunter der ganze Stamm Naphtali, nach Assyrien. (2. B. der Könige Cap. 15, V. 29 und Jesaias Cap. 8, V. 33.)

3) Im neunten Regierungsjahre Hoschea ben Ela fiel Salmanasser, König von Assyrien, ins Land, eroberte nach dreijähriger Belagerung die Residenz Schomrom (Samaria) und verpflanzte den Rest der zehn Stämme nach Assyrien, Chalach, Chabor, Medien und an die Ufer des Flusses Gosen. (2. Buch der Könige Cap. 17, V. 3—6.)

Das Königreich Israel wurde demnach durch drei aufeinander folgende Einfälle aufgelöst und die verschiedenen Abtheilungen der gefangenen Kinder Israels an verschiedene Orte geführt, deren Namen nicht immer bemerkt sind. Die Bibel giebt jedoch in Bezug darauf verschiedene Andeutungen. So heißt es im Propheten Jesaias[1]: „In diesen Tagen wird es sich ereignen, daß der Herr zum zweiten Male seine Hand ausstrecken wird, um die Ueberreste seines Volkes zu sammeln, welche in Assyrien, Egypten, Pathros, Cusch, Elam, Sinhar, Hamath und anderen Inseln des Meeres wohnen." — Weiter heißt es dann: „Fürchte nichts, denn ich bin mit dir, ich werde die Nachwelt kommen lassen, und werde dich von Sonnenuntergang versammeln. Ich werde zu dem Norden sprechen: Gieb! und zu dem Süden:

[1] Jesaias Cap. 11, V. 11.

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Widersetze dich nicht! Führe meine Söhne von Ferne und meine Töchter von den Enden der Erde." [1] — Endlich heißt es noch: „Diese da werden von Ferne, Jene von Norden, Andere von Westen und der Rest wird von Sinim kommen." [2]

Egypten und Assyrien sind genugsam bekannt. Was Cusch anbetrifft, so ist man allgemein der übereinstimmenden Ansicht, daß damit Aethopien und Abyssinien gemeint sind, denn Jeremias sagt: „Wird der Cuschi seine Farbe wechseln und der Leopard seine Flecken?" [3] wodurch deutlich auf die Hautfarbe hingewiesen ist. — Elam ist Persien, wie aus dem Propheten Daniel hervorgeht, wenn er sagt: „Susa Hauptstadt von Elam", [4] und ich glaube, daß dieser eine Beweis genügt. Den zerstreuten Stämmen in diesem letzteren Lande wurde durch ein Edict des Königs Cyrus die Rückkehr in ihr Vaterland gestattet, was sich besonders auf die Stämme Juda und Benjamin bezog, welche mit einigen Priestern, Leviten und verschiedenen Gliedern der Familie Aron's allein nach Jerusalem zurückzogen, woran ich noch die Bemerkung knüpfe, daß Cyrus in der Bibel „Kores" genannt wird. — Eine zweite Rückkehr fand unter der Regierung Artaxerxes' statt, doch waren es die letzteren zwei Stämme, welche von der Erlaubniß Gebrauch machten. Aus allem diesem ergiebt sich, daß die Verbannten Israels nebst einer kleinen Anzahl vom Stamme Levi [5] von der Gnade beider Edicte ausgeschlossen, in den Städten Mediens und anderen Orten zurückblieben, wohin sie nach den oben angeführten Stellen verpflanzt waren.

Chalach und Chabor sind, wie ich glaube, Chilah oder Hillah, und Kabur-Kefil, wohin die zehn Stämme vertrieben, die nachher weiter im Innern von Asien verpflanzt. — Der Gegenstand ist auch durch frühere Autoren behandelt.

Sinear ist das Land Kurdistan, welches nach dem Targum Jeruschalmi bei der Stadt Nisibin beginnt. [6]

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[1] Jesaias Cap. 43, V. 5 u. 6.
[2] Jesaias Cap. 49, V. 12.
[3] Jeremias Cap. 13, V. 23.
[4] Daniel Cap. 8, V. 2.
[5] Esra Cap. 8, V. 15, 18, 19.
[6] 1. V. Moses Cap. 10, V. 10.

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Chamath wird durch die erste lateinische Bibel mit „Sonnenaufgang“ erklärt, es bedeutet „Hitze“, im weiteren Sinne die „Sonne“, und folglich die Gegend, wo sich das Tagesgestirn erhebt. Der hebräische Ausdruck „Chamath“ kann daher, wie ich glaube, alle Länder bedeuten, die östlich von Palästina liegen.

Die Inseln des Occident. Diese Bezeichnung ist eine sehr ausgedehnte, doch gestatten die Entdeckungen berühmter Reisenden die Behauptung, daß damit die westindischen Inseln gemeint seien.

Nach den glaubwürdigen Angaben anderer Reisenden führe ich noch folgende Notizen an:

Pathrus ist nach der Mikwe Israel, Fol. 11, S. 2, das Land Parthia am Caspischen Meere.

„Ich werde deine Kinder vom Morgenlande zurückführen.“ In diesen Worten spricht die Bibel von den zerstreuten Israeliten in den Ländern Sinear, Persien, Chalach und Chabor, in Indien und China, welches letztere die Orientalen Tschina nennen.

„Ich werde dich vom Abendlande versammeln“ bezieht sich auf die Stämme Juda und Benjamin in gewissen Ländern von Europa, welche der geographischen Richtung nach westlich oder nordwestlich von Palästina liegen.

Die Anrede an den Mittag: „Stelle keine Hindernisse!“ bezieht sich auf Aethiopien, Abyssinien und Nubien.

Capitel 19.

Ostindien ist seit undenklichen Zeiten von vielen verschiedenen Völkerstämmen bewohnt. Ich habe meine Beobachtungen vorzüglich den sechs Hauptstämmen gewidmet und ihre Sitten und religiösen Gebräuche kennen zu lernen gesucht, von welchen ich hier einen kurzen Ueberblick gebe. — Wie in meinem ganzen Werke, so habe ich auch hier meine Aufmerksamkeit zunächst

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meinen Glaubensbrüdern zugewandt und rede also zunächst von denselben.

Ich werde über folgende Stämme sprechen:

1) Die Bene-Israel oder die weißen Juden.
2) Die Canarinz.[1]
3) Die schwarzen Juden von Cotschin.
4) Die Banianen.
5) Die Paarssi.
6) Die Hindus.

1. Die Bene-Israel oder die weißen Juden.

Der Stamm, den man mit diesem Namen bezeichnet, ist neben dem der Canarinz, welche ich ebenfalls theilweise für Nachkommen der zehn Stämme halte, schon seit dem hohen Alterthume in Ostindien ansäßig. Ich bin der festen Ueberzeugung und halte den Beweis für nicht schwierig, daß die Bene-Israel nicht allein wirkliche Juden, sondern auch directe Nachkommen der zehn Stämme sind, welche durch die Assyrer zur Zeit Hosea's, des letzten Königs von Israel, nach Chalach, Chabor, an die Ufer des Ganges und in die Städte Mediens verpflanzt wurden.

Ich stütze meine Behauptung auf folgende Thatsachen und Beobachtungen:

1) Ihre systematische und strenge Absonderung, welche sie gegen die heidnischen Stämme, in deren Mitte sie wohnen, beobachten, und ihr Streben jede Verbindung mit denselben zu vermeiden.

2) Ihre genaue und strenge Beobachtung der wesentlichsten jüdischen Religionsvorschriften, z. B. der Beschneidung und der Heilighaltung des Sabbaths.

3) Die besondere Sorgfalt, welche sie auf die Ausübung der Gebräuche des Schächtens und der in der Bibel verbotenen Thierarten legen.

[1] Eine Ableitung von Cranganor.

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4) Ihre fromme Verehrung der Gesetzesrollen, welche sie, ohne dieselben lesen zu können, in ihren Synagogen aufbewahren. Diese Gesetzesrollen sind sehr alterthümlich, ihre Schrift ist von röthlicher Farbe, wie man sie nur der Einwirkung der Zeit zuschreiben kann, und gleichen im Uebrigen ganz den unsrigen.

5) Der Name ihres Stammes, den sie seit Jahrhunderten führen und unter welchem sie in ganz Hindostan bekannt sind.

In Bezug auf die Abstammung der Bene-Israel von den zehn Stämmen führe ich noch folgende Beweise an: [1]

1) Der in der Bibel genannte Fluß Gosen ist nach der Behauptung der Bene-Israel kein anderer als der durch Indien strömende Ganges, an dessen Ufern dieser Stamm zahlreich ansäßig ist. Das indische Wort „Ganges" enthält alle Buchstaben des hebräischen „Gosen".

2) Es ist bekannt, daß der Ganges in Hoch-Thibet, einem an das Königreich Kabul grenzenden Lande, entspringt. Von der Seite, woher die Kinder Israel nach Ostindien kamen, ist der Weg durch die Wüste ein so gefahrvoller und schwieriger, daß nur große Karawanen in langen Zwischenräumen sich in dieselbe hineinwagen, und bis heute besitzt man nur höchst unvollkommene und zweifelhafte Berichte über die Völkerschaften, welche diese wilden unbekannten Gegenden bewohnen. Die Juden, die durch diese Wüste gewandert sind, haben dort gleichsam eine Spur ihres Durchzuges, einige Brüder hinterlassen, welche sich daselbst bis auf unsere Tage erhalten haben.

3) Die Bene-Israel haben keine Cohanim aus dem Priesterstamme Aron's und Leviten. Es ist genugsam bekannt, daß die Juden sowohl des deutschen wie des portugiesischen Ritus, welche aus dem Stamme Juda und Benjamin stammen, noch heute Cohanim und Leviten haben, ihnen besondere Achtung schenken und ihnen selbst im Tempel einige Vorrechte einräumen, als Andenken an die alten Vorrechte dieses Priestergeschlechtes. Ebenso bekannt ist es, daß der ganze Stamm Levi, welcher das Priesteramt versah, mit den Geschicken des königlichen Hauses von Juda aufs

[1] Ritter's Erdkunde B. 2. Thl. 5. Abth. Asien S. 594—601 behauptet, daß sie vom Stamme Manasse abstammen.

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engste verbunden war und sich nicht unter die abtrünnigen Stämme des Reiches Israel mischte.

4) Die in Indien wohnenden Bene-Israel besaßen früher eine Chronik, welche bis zur Zeit ihrer Ankunft in dieses Land reichte. Unglücklicher Weise ist indeß diese Chronik während der vielen Kriege, welche mit den Europäern um die Occupation des Landes geführt wurden, verloren gegangen, da die Bene-Israel dadurch gezwungen wurden, von einer Provinz zur andern zu fliehen. Die Bene-Israel von Cotschin auf der Küste von Malabar, besitzen indeß ein ähnliches Document und haben dasselbe unter allen Stürmen der Jahrhunderte bewahrt. In dieser Chronik werden die Geschicke des Stammes seit seiner Verbannung unter Hosea bis auf unsere Tage mitgetheilt. Lange Zeit war dieses wichtige Document im Besitz der Familie Halagi, der angesehensten des Landes. Ich hatte das lebhafteste Verlangen, dieses merkwürdige und interessante Werk zu sehen, konnte jedoch nicht dazu gelangen. Ein Reisender, der im vorigen Jahrhundert diese Gegenden bereiste, war glücklicher als ich, er konnte sogar einige Stellen der Chronik abschreiben, welche in der Mikwe Israel zu finden, auch von Doctor Jost in seiner Geschichte und in unserer ersten Ausgabe dieses Werkes mitgetheilt sind.

In der Gegend von Bombay, zwei Stunden von Barkout entfernt, befindet sich eine Gemeinde der Bene-Israel; sie leben nach patriarchalischem Systeme. Ihr Nassi (Oberhaupt, Vorsteher) war ein Mann Namens Babi. Von ihnen wurde mir berichtet, daß sie vor der Ankunft der Europäer einen zahlreichen Stamm gebildet hätten, der durch ein selbstgewähltes Oberhaupt mit dem Titel Scheik, regiert wurde. Gezwungen sich zu zerstreuen, suchten viele von ihnen einen Zufluchtsort an den äußersten Grenzen von Hindostan, wo sie sich einer gewissen Unabhängigkeit erfreuen. Als Bestätigung dieser Angaben dienen auch die Mittheilungen anderer Reisenden, wie z. B. Gildemeister's, welcher erzählt, daß bei Beginn der christlichen Zeitrechnung in Ostindien jüdische Vice-Könige regiert haben, woraus sich auf eine sehr zahlreiche Bevölkerung von Juden schließen läßt. Auch Dr. Wilson, welcher 1839 in Indien war, erzählt von den Bene-Israel in der Umgegend von Bombay. Die Bene-Israel in dieser Colonie wohnen in

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Häusern, welche mit Gärten umgeben sind, die sie selbst bebauen; sie sind im Allgemeinen wohlhabend und beschäftigen sich mit Ackerbau und Handel. Mit Fremden sprechen sie indisch, unter sich jedoch das Tamulische, in welchem viele hebräische Worte vorkommen. Auch die Gesichtszüge der Bene-Israel verrathen ihre Abstammung, denn obgleich der Einfluß des Klima und des Landes einige Veränderung darin verursacht haben, so ist doch der wesentliche Gesichtstypus derselbe geblieben. Noch vor wenigen Jahren waren sie in Religionssachen sehr unwissend, und hatten die hebräische Sprache bis auf die Elementarkenntniß der Buchstaben gänzlich verlernt, obgleich sie wie bemerkt mehre Pentateuche in ihren Synagogen andächtig bewahren. Ihr Gottesdienst beschränkte sich auf einige äußerliche Verrichtungen, welche durch die Länge der Zeit entstellt sind; doch war ihre Verehrung für das mosaische Gesetz tief eingewurzelt und noch heute schmücken sie ihre Gesetzesrollen mit großer Pracht, nahen sich ihnen voll Ehrfurcht und küssen sie inbrünstig, worauf sie sich langsam mit stillem Gebete entfernen. Sie hatten keine hebräische Gebete und außer dem einen Verse „Schema Israel" waren alle ihre Gebete in ihrer Landessprache; doch hegen sie den festen Glauben an die Ankunft des Messias.

Seit sieben oder acht Jahren senden die in Bombay wohnenden Juden arabischer Herkunft, aus Bagdad und Bassora stammend, welche eine ungefähr 50 Familien starke Gemeinde bilden, Schächter und Lehrer unter diese zerstreuten Völkerschaften, um einige Kenntnisse und die Vorschriften des Judaismus unter ihnen zu verbreiten. Obgleich aber die Juden von Bombay den Bene-Israel günstig gesinnt sind, so betrachten sie dieselben doch nicht als wirkliche Glaubensbrüder und weichen der Verheirathung mit ihnen aus, weil sie mit Unrecht diesen Stamm mit den Canarinz und anderen Heiden gleichstellen. Die Bene-Israel aber nehmen eifrig den Namen Juden in Anspruch und streben mehr und mehr nach Vereinigung mit den Orthodoxen.

Einige christliche Missionäre besuchen zuweilen diesen Stamm, ohne bis jetzt in ihren Bemühungen um Proselyten Erfolg gehabt zu haben.

Ich schätze die Gesammtzahl der Bene-Israel in dieser Colonie

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und anderen Orten, wo ich sie besucht habe, auf etwa 2000 Familien.[1]

In der Stadt Bombay wohnen etwa 50 Familien Juden aus Bagdad, die eine Synagoge, aber keinen Chacham, sondern nur einen Schochet haben; die reichsten unserer Glaubensbrüder in Bombay sind: David Seaſon, Moſes Esra und Isaak David.

Capitel 20.

2. Die Canarinz.

Dieſer Stamm, welcher die Küſte Malabar bewohnt, bietet für den Beobachter ein eigenthümliches Schauſpiel dar. Die Canarinz haben nämlich keine eigene beſondere Religion, ſondern ſie befolgen die verſchiedenen religiöſen Ceremonien der ſie umwohnenden anderen Volksſtämme, indem ſie glauben, daß ſie dadurch auch die richtige und wahre Religion befolgen. Namentlich haben ſie eine große Zahl jüdiſcher Gebräuche, worunter vorzugsweiſe die Feier des Purim-Feſtes (Feſt der Eſther) zu erwähnen iſt. Bei dieſer Feſtlichkeit machen ſie, um derſelben einen bildlichen Ausdruck zu geben, zwei hölzerne Figuren, bekleiden dieſelben mit prächtigen Gewändern und ſchlagen ſie ſo lange gegen einander, bis eine davon zerſchmettert hinfällt. Die zerſchlagene Figur ſtellt den Haman, die andere Mardochai vor. Zum Schluſſe treibt man dieſes fröhliche Spiel ſo weit, daß die Figur des alten Miniſters Amalek aufgehängt wird.

Die Herkunft dieſes Volksſtammes und die Zeitepoche, in welcher derſelbe ſich in Indien feſten Sitz gemacht hat, iſt ungewiß. Ich mag es, die Behauptung aufzuſtellen, daß er ein Ueberreſt der verſchollenen zehn Stämme Israels iſt, der im Laufe

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[1] Nach Buchanan Bd. 2, S. 1005 nebst nur 800 Juden.

der Jahrhunderte und unter den verschiedensten Verhältnissen seine israelitische Herkunft vergessen hat.

Der Verfasser des Zemach David und andere Schriftsteller berichten, daß ein großer Theil der zehn Stämme sich mit der Bevölkerung Hindostans verschmolzen habe.[1] Man kann danach behaupten, daß die Canarinz ursprünglich zu den ersteren gehört haben, da sie trotz der Verschiedenheit des Kultus nur an Einen Gott als höchstes Wesen glauben und nur unter sich Heirathen schließen; wahrscheinlich sind sie durch irgend welche äußere Umstände gezwungen worden, den Glauben ihrer Väter zu verlassen, von welchem sie indeß immer noch einigen Gebräuchen treu geblieben sind. Es ist diese Annahme um so leichter glaublich, da in anderen Ländern, in Europa namentlich in Spanien und Rußland, ganz ähnliche Erscheinungen stattfanden: so fanden sich in Rußland zu Anfang dieses Jahrhunderts Tausende von Juden, die unter dem Namen Schobatnik (Beobachter des Sabbath) bekannt waren, welche sich nach mehren Jahrhunderten gezwungenen Abfalls freiwillig wieder zum Judenthum, dem Glauben ihrer Vorfahren, bekannten. Ich habe eine Zusammenstellung der historischen Thatsachen über die Schobatnik verfaßt, und dieselbe im Jahre 1855 zu Tlemsan in Algerien unter dem Titel: Vierjähriger Krieg der Polen gegen die Russen und Tartaren (1648 bis 1652)" herausgegeben, auf dessen S. 64—69 ich hier verweise.[2] Die Schobatnik sowohl wie die Canarinz hatten ihre Abstammung gänzlich vergessen: sie feierten mechanisch die traditionellen Feste der Juden, und es bedurfte nur eines zufälligen Umstandes, um ihre Rückkehr zum Mosaismus zu veranlassen.

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[1] Ritter's Erdkunde Th. 5, Buch 2, S. 599. Die Juden, erzählte man A. Buchanan in Indien, die einst den Indus überschritten, hätten sich mit den Völkern und Sitten ihrer neuen Wohnsitze so sehr vermischt, daß sie von Vorüberreisenden wenigstens oft nicht mehr als Juden anerkannt würden.

[2] Ein Theil der Vorrede dieses Werkchens und der Schluß S. 61—63 desselben sind nicht von mir, sondern vom französischen Uebersetzer zugefügt.

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Capitel 21.

3. Die schwarzen Juden von Cotschin.[1]

In dieser Stadt und ihrer Umgebung wohnen etwa 2000 schwarze Bekenner des jüdischen Glaubens, deren Hautfarbe jedoch nicht ganz so dunkel wie die der Neger ist. Sie sind wirkliche Juden, sehr religiös und ziemlich unterrichtet. Ueber ihre Herkunft erzählt die oft angeführte Mikwe Israel, daß sich nach dem Untergange des Königreichs Israel gegen 10,000 Vertriebene mit einer großen Anzahl Sklaven nach dem südlichen Asien gewandt hätten. Die Sklaven, welche vorher zum mosaischen Glauben übergangen waren, hätten auf der Wanderung ihre Herren ermordet und sich ihrer Güter bemächtigt, wären indeß später dem Judenthume treu geblieben.[2] — Diese Angabe stimmt mit den Traditionen, welche ich an Ort und Stelle gesammelt habe, nicht überein, es ist indeß möglich, daß es zwei Stämme schwarzer Juden gegeben hat, von denen der eine wirklich von jenen Sklaven abstammt, während der andere seine Herkunft in folgender Weise erzählt:

Die Eroberung eines Theiles von Hindostan durch die Europäer hatte dem Handel ungeheure Quellen geöffnet und auch die Bewohner der benachbarten Länder in dies Eldorado gelockt, wohin sie in zahlreichen Schaaren wanderten. Unter diesen Abenteurern befanden sich auch eine große Anzahl Juden, die jung und unverheirathet aus Bagdad, Bassora, Yemin und anderen Gegenden hierher zogen, um ihr Glück zu suchen. Nachdem diese jungen Männer sich in den eroberten Provinzen niedergelassen hatten, kauften sie Negersklavinnen und heiratheten diese später, nachdem sie den jüdischen Glauben angenommen hatten.

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[1] Siehe Ritter's Erdkunde 5. Th., 2. Buch, Asien, S. 598.

[2] Im eben erwähnten Buche S. 600 wird bemerkt, daß die schwarzen Juden selbst glauben von den zehn Stämmen abzustammen.

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Diese Erzählung der eingebornen schwarzen Juden über ihre Abstammung wird durch zwei wichtige Thatsachen glaublich, nämlich dadurch, daß diese schwarzen Juden nur in den von den Europäern occupirten Landestheilen wohnen, und zweitens, daß ihre religiösen Gebräuche mit denen der Juden des morgenländischen Ritus identisch sind, was mit Bestimmtheit auf eine Abstammung von denselben schließen läßt. Für diese Meinung und gegen ihre angebliche Herkunft von Sklaven spricht auch noch das, daß ihre Gesichtszüge und ihr Haar den rein orientalischen Typus an sich tragen.

Dr. Buchanan erzählt in seinen Reiseberichten, daß diese jüdische Bevölkerung hebräische Manuscripte und Pentateuche auf Pergament besitzt, welche von jüdischen Auswanderern herstammen, die nach der Mikwe Israel von ihren Sklaven beraubt und getödtet wurden. Ich habe diese Documente selbst gesehen, jedoch nichts besonders Merkwürdiges oder Interessantes in Bezug auf ihre Alterthümlichkeit oder ihren Inhalt in ihnen gefunden.

Die schwarzen Juden tragen den Fluch des Vorurtheils wegen ihrer Farbe. So wie die meisten Juden aus Bagdad einer Verbindung mit den Bene-Israel ausweichen, so fliehen die weißen Juden alle Verbindung mit den schwarzen Brüdern.[1] Im allgemeinen habe ich bemerkt, daß die übrigen Juden mehr Sympathien für ihre schwarzen Glaubensgenossen, als für die Bene-Israel haben; denn sie nehmen sich ihrer Armen an und machen vielfach große Geschäfte mit ihnen, während sie den Verkehr mit den Bene-Israel meiden. Die schwarzen Juden von Cochin aber erfreuen sich jeder Anerkennung als Glaubensbrüder und sind auch sehr gastfreundlich gegen fremde Juden.

Die schwarzen Juden haben ihre Gemeinden, Chachamim und Schulen; sie leben abgesondert von den übrigen und beschäftigen sich mit Handel, worin mehre von ihnen eine glänzende Stellung errungen haben. Sie haben zwei oder drei Synagogen, große Säle ohne alle Ausschmückung, an deren Wänden rings herum Sitzbänke und in der Mitte die Bima (Altar) angebracht

[1] Ritter's Erdkunde, Th. 5, Buch 2, Asien, S. 599. Auch sehen die weißen Juden auf die schwarzen wie auf eine andere geringere unreine Kaste herab.

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ist, wo die Vorlesung des Pentateuch vorgenommen wird. Ihr Ritual ist dasselbe wie bei den orientalischen Juden, doch singen sie die Piutim (Hymnen) auf indische Weise. Sie befolgen die talmudischen Gesetze. — Ihre Kleidung ist keine besondere, sie tragen sich wie die Bene-Israel, die Reichen nach der Sitte der Juden von Bagdad, die Uebrigen nach der der Banianen.

Capitel 22.

Reise nach Kabul. — Die Volksstämme Indiens.

Meine Reise nach Cotschin hatte lediglich den Zweck gehabt, die oben erwähnte Chronik der Bene-Israel selbst zu sehen, was mir indeß nicht gelungen ist, obgleich ich von den Eingebornen die Versicherung erhielt, daß dieselbe noch existire. Ich reiste von dort nach Bombay zurück und trat von da aus meine Reise nach Kabul an, welche ich in folgender Route ausführte. Nach sieben Tagereisen durch die Gebirge Gaths gelangte ich zunächst nach Punah und von da nach Scholapur, der ersten Besitzung der Muselmanen. Nach abermals sieben Tagereisen erreichte ich die Stadt Hyderabad, wo das Gebiet der Muselmanen endigt. Elf weitere Tagereisen brachten mich nach Crinsa am Goubli, neun Tagereisen von dort nach Nagpur und abermals acht Tagereisen nach dem bisher den Engländern gehörenden Rewah. — Bis hierher hatte ich von Bombay aus den ganzen Weg auf Ochsenwagen zurückgelegt. Von Rewah aus nach dem nur eine Tagereise entfernten Mirzapur am Ganges, welches den Hindus gehört, benutzte ich Pferdewagen. Nach vier Tagereisen erreichte ich mit einem Ochsenwagen die Stadt Allahabad und fuhr dann in derselben Art nach Cawnpur, wozu ich sieben Tage gebrauchte. Von Cawnpur nach Delhi (acht Tagereisen) und nach Amritzjir (eine Tagereise) hatte ich wieder Pferdewagen.

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In Amritzjir schloß ich mich einer nach Lahore am Ravi ziehenden Karawane an und gelangte dorthin nach elf Tagereisen; hier hört das englische Gebiet auf. Mit einer andern Karawane reiste ich dann nach Peschawer am Kabul, der Grenze Afghanistans, und gelangte, nachdem ich den Cheiberpaß überschritten, in siebenzehn Tagen nach Kabul. Die ganze Reise von Bombay nach Kabul hatte beinahe hundert Tage gedauert.

An manchen Orten während dieser großen Reise traf ich zerstreute Juden, vermochte jedoch keine genaue Notizen über dieselben zu sammeln, da ich meine Reise nicht unterbrechen konnte. Ueber die heidnischen Stämme, ihre Sitten und Culten theile ich dem Leser einige meiner Beobachtungen mit, Auszüge aus meinen in Algier im Jahre 1854 veröffentlichten Schriften: „Un an de séjour aux Indes orientales", in französischer Sprache geschrieben, und „Nesiath Israel", in arabischer Sprache geschrieben und mit hebräischen Lettern gedruckt.

Die Banianen.

Die Banianen zerfallen in mehre Secten; einige unter ihnen beten das Feuer an, andere das Wasser, noch andere haben eine Kuh als Gottheit. Die Gebräuche der Feuer- und Wasseranbeter stimmen mit denen der weiter unten beschriebenen Paarsi überein; ich erwähne deshalb hier nur die letztere Secte, die Kuhanbeter.

Die geheiligte Kuh ist an verschiedenen Zeichen erkennbar, und wird von ihrer Geburt an ihrer hohen Bestimmung wegen verehrt. Sie wird niemals zu Arbeiten und Diensten benutzt und stets mit dem schönsten Weizen gefüttert, sie erfreut sich deshalb einer ziemlichen Beleibtheit und ihr Fell ist glatt und glänzend.

Die Verehrer dieser Gottheit versammeln sich täglich an einem außerhalb des Ortes liegenden Platze und bilden einen Kreis, in dessen Mitte die Kuh gestellt wird. Einer der Priester predigt den Gläubigen und nimmt dann ein oder mehre kostbare Gefäße, um den Urin des Viehes darin aufzufangen. Man vermengt diese heilige Flüssigkeit mit einer rothen Farbe und jeder

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Priester taucht einen Finger in dieselbe, um sich über die Augenbrauen einen Strich zu machen. Wenn die Kuh aus irgend einem Grunde nicht urinirt, so reizt sie der Priester dazu mit dem Finger.

Als Kopfbedeckung tragen die Banianen einen Turban, dessen Stoff jedoch nicht wie gewöhnlich um den Kopf gewickelt wird, sondern nach vorn gezogen über der Stirn durch Knoten ihr religiöses Symbol, das Horn, bildet. Ihre Kleider sind weiß, sie bestehen aus einem langen, auf der Brust zugeknöpften Kleide, einer langen, europäischen Hose, Schuhen und Strümpfen.

Die Banianen haben eine besondere Sprache, indeß sprechen sie wie alle Indier auch ihre Landessprache, das Indische. Sie hegen einen besonderen Abscheu gegen den Genuß von Fleisch, sogar gegen Milch, und entnehmen ihre Nahrungsmittel nur dem Pflanzenreiche. Ihre Kinder werden schon im dritten oder vierten Jahre verheirathet, bleiben jedoch bis zu ihrer Mannbarkeit bei den Eltern.[1] Wenn in dieser Zwischenzeit einer der Gatten stirbt, so ist der andere zu einem ewigen Wittwenstande verdammt, aus welchem Grunde die große Immoralität der dortigen Frauen entsteht. Die letzteren tragen ein langes seidenes, gewöhnlich rothes Gewand, und wenn sie ausgehen, einen langen Schleier, der zu beiden Seiten herabhängt und das Gesicht frei läßt.

Die Todten werden nicht begraben, sondern verbrannt[2] und die Asche in den Wind gestreut; zuweilen auch sammelt die Familie des Verstorbenen etwas davon und bewahrt sie sorgfältig in einer Urne. Sie glauben nicht an eine dereinstige Wiederauferstehung, der Tod gilt bei ihnen für eine völlige Auflösung des ganzen Menschen und deshalb meinen sie richtig zu handeln, wenn sie den Körper ganz verschwinden lassen. Nur die Kinder unter achtzehn Monaten werden, wenn sie sterben, nicht verbrannt, sondern begraben, eine Eigenthümlichkeit, deren Grund ich nicht erfahren konnte.

Mit der englischen Occupation des Landes sind diese Ge-

[1] Ein uralter Gebrauch im Orient. Nach der Bibel (1. B. Moses Cap. 21, V. 5; Cap. 22, V. 20—24; Cap. 23, V. 1, und Cap. 25, V. 20) war Rebekka, als Isaak sie heirathete, nur 3 Jahre alt.

[2] Man findet auch in der Bibel eine Stelle (1. Samuel. Cap. 31, V. 12), welche einen derartigen Gebrauch erwähnt.

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bräuche verboten; doch bieten die Banianen alle List und Kunst auf, um der Aufsicht der Behörden zu entgehen und ihre traditionellen Sitten fortzusetzen. In Maskat war ich selbst Augenzeuge einer dieser Begräbniß-Ceremonien; als das Feuer den Bauch der Leiche ergriff, gab dieser platzend einen Knall, wie ein Büchsenschuß stark.

5. Die Paarsi.

Ein großer Theil dieses Stammes gehört, wie bereits oben erwähnt, zu den Feuer- und Wasser-Anbetern; viele jedoch beten die Gestirne am Himmel, die Sonne, den Mond und die Sterne als Gottheiten an. Ihr täglicher Cultus besteht darin, daß sie sich an jedem Abend, je nach der Secte, welcher sie zugethan sind, an einem besondern Platze unter freiem Himmel versammeln und beten. Die Sonnenanbeter legen dabei die Hand aufs Herz und blicken ihr göttliches Gestirn an, die Mond- und Sternanbeter stehen nach Sonnenuntergang in derselben feierlichen Haltung, die Augen zu ihrer Gottheit gewandt. Die Wasseranbeter gehen, je nach der Lage ihres Wohnortes, bis an die Knie entweder ins Meer oder in einen Fluß und verrichten dort ihr Gebet.

Jede dieser Secten trägt als äußerliches Zeichen des Glaubens, welchem sie anhängen, ein besonders darauf bezügliches Kennzeichen. Wir haben oben erzählt, daß die Banianen als Kuhanbeter ihren Turban an der Vorderseite in ein Horn knoten: in ähnlicher Weise kennzeichnen sich auch diese Secten. Die Sonnenanbeter machen aus ihrem Turban einen Zipfel um das rechte Ohr, die Mondanbeter um das linke Ohr. Die Anbeter der Sonne tragen eine cylinderförmige Kopfbedeckung, ähnlich unseren Hüten, ohne Rand und vorne mit einem kleinen Schirm zum Schutze des Gesichts, deren Stoff nach dem Geschmack und den Mitteln des Eigenthümers verschieden ist, aber immer viele kleine Pünktchen enthält, welche die Sterne vorstellen sollen. Die Feueranbeter sind wie die Banianen ganz weiß gekleidet und haben als Zeichen ihrer Secte einen rothen Fleck auf den Kleidern.

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Alle diese Secten genießen nur Pflanzenkost, ihr Abscheu vor Fleisch geht sogar noch weiter als bei den Banianen, denn schon der bloße Anblick desselben ist ihnen verhaßt. Ich sah in Bombay eines Tages zwei Militärposten auf beiden Seiten der Straße, in welcher das öffentliche Schlachthaus steht, die mir auf meine Frage erzählten, ein reicher Paarssi, welcher dort wohne, habe sich von der Obrigkeit das Recht erkauft, das Herumtragen von Fleisch zu verhindern; er habe sie zur Bewachung hierhergestellt und bezahle gut dafür.

Eine besondere Unsitte dieser Secten, welche ich im März 1849 in Bombay selbst mit anzusehen Gelegenheit hatte, ist folgende: An drei aufeinander folgenden Tagen in jedem Jahre versammeln sich die Paarssi auf einem öffentlichen Platze; sie beginnen dort miteinander ein förmliches Handgemenge, sie schlagen sich und werfen sich mit Steinen und Schmutz, und während dieser Zeit ergeben sie sich der widerlichsten und ausschweifendsten Unzucht.

An einem andern Tage hatte ich einen nicht minder merkwürdigen Anblick. Es war in der Stadt eine Feuersbrunst ausgebrochen, und während von allen Seiten die Einwohner herbeieilten, um den Brand zu löschen, warfen sich die Anbeter des Elementes, welches im Augenblicke so furchtbare Zerstörung anrichtete, wie bezaubert zur Erde und beteten.

6. Die Hindus.

Die Hindus, die ursprünglichen Indier, sind von allen Völkerschaften, welche das Land bewohnen, die rohesten und wildesten. Weder die Himmelskörper noch die Elemente sind ihre Gottheit. Sie haben dieselbe aus der Thierwelt entlehnt und finden sie in dem bescheidenen Thiere, der Ziege. Sie wird göttlich verehrt, und zwar so, daß jeder Gläubige seine eigene, an die Hausthür angebundene Ziege anbetet, sie melken das Thier und schütten dann die Milch entweder ins Meer oder in den Fluß, je nach der Lage des Orts; darin besteht ihr ganzer Cultus.

Sie essen Fleisch und Geflügel, doch halten sie keine gemeinschaftliche Mahle, sondern jeder ißt abgesondert von den Uebrigen.

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Sie gehen nackt und bedecken nur die Schamtheile mit einer zwischen den Beinen durchlaufenden Binde, welche vorn und hinten an einem um den Leib geschlungenen Gürtel befestigt ist. Die Frauen tragen kurze Beinkleider wie unsere Badehosen und bedecken den Busen mit einer Art dünnen Schleier, Arme und Beine sind ganz entblößt. Die indischen Buhlerinnen sind gegen Andersglaubende sehr zurückhaltend und pflegen nur mit den Ihrigen Umgang.

Obgleich viele unter ihnen sehr reich sind, so lassen sie sich doch in den Städten zu den schwierigsten und niedrigsten Arbeiten herbei. Ihre Haut ist mehr kupferfarbig wie die der andern Inder; sie sprechen nur indisch.

Capitel 23.

Kabul.

Nach einer beinahe hundert Tage langen Reise langte ich in dieser Stadt an. Sie ist sehr groß und stark bevölkert. Von meinen Glaubensgenossen traf ich dort nur wenige, welche aus Buchara eingewandert sind. Ich kann über die Stadt und ihre Bewohner keinen genauen und ausführlichen Bericht abstatten, da es mir nicht möglich war, längere Zeit dort zu verweilen. Die Stadt befand sich nämlich in Folge einer nicht lange vorher stattgehabten Revolution noch immer in Gährung, deren Ursache mir meine dortigen Glaubensgenossen in folgender Weise mittheilten.

Es herrscht dort der allgemeine Glaube an eine Seelenwanderung und körperliche Auferstehung, welche letztere jedoch nicht unbedingt stattfinden soll, sondern zu der man sich das Anrecht dadurch erwirbt, daß mit einem Todten ein Lebender sich freiwillig opfert. Wenn ein Mann kinderlos stirbt, so wird seine Frau mit seinem Leichnam zugleich verbrannt; denn die lebens-

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kräftige Seele soll dem Todten zur Auferstehung der erstgeborenen Seele dienen, und daraus erfolgt dann eine zweite Vermählung der treuen Gatten.

Die Ceremonien des Menschenopfers sind folgende: Der Leichnam wird acht Tage hindurch in einem Zimmer ausgestellt, der Ueberlebende (Mann oder Frau) aber geschmückt in einen fürstlichen Palast geführt. Dort werden in seiner Gegenwart Tanz, Musik und Spiele vorgenommen und dreimal täglich kommen die Ortsbewohner, um vor ihm wie vor einem Götzen niederzufallen. Am achten Tage wird der Lebende kostbar geschmückt mit dem Leichnam aus dem Orte an einen bestimmten Platz getragen, wo man ein Häuschen von sehr trockenem und leicht entzündbarem Holze errichtet hat, in welches der todte Körper hineingelegt wird. Der Lebende wird siebenmal feierlich um das Häuschen herumgetragen, woran sich Alle, sogar Kinder betheiligen, und nach jedem Umgange fallen die Anwesenden vor ihm nieder. Nach dem siebenten Umgange entreißt man dem Opfer Schmuck und Gewänder und legt ihn zu dem Entseelten in das Todtenhäuschen, welches dann sofort an allen vier Ecken angezündet wird. Um das Jammergeschrei des Opfers zu übertönen, stimmt die Versammlung unter Geschrei und Mißtönen des Tambourins Hymnen an. Wenn alles verkohlt ist, sammelt man die Asche der beiden Gatten in einen Aschenkrug, um sie später in einem Grabgewölbe beizusetzen.

Der König von Kabul hatte eine einzige Tochter, deren Gatte gestorben war. Gleich nach dem Verscheiden waren die Priester zu der jungen Wittwe gekommen mit der Bitte, sich den heiligen Gebräuchen zu unterziehen, wozu sich die Prinzessin, die ihren Gatten leidenschaftlich liebte und einen blinden Glauben an die Unfehlbarkeit des religiösen Gebrauches hegte, bereit erklärte. Die Ceremonie fand statt, und die Asche dieses jugendlichen und hochgestellten Opfers eines barbarischen Vorurtheils wurde mit der ihres Gatten vereinigt.

Der trostlose Vater fiel in tiefe Schwermuth über den Verlust seines einzigen Kindes und beschloß, diesem gottlosen Gebrauch ein Ende zu machen. Zur Mitternachtsstunde ließ er durch seine Wachen die Wohnungen der Priester überfallen und mehre hundert

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derselben ermorden, als Sühnopfer für den Tod seiner Tochter. Diese blutige Rache regte indeß einen großen Theil der Bevölkerung, welcher den alten Sitten anhing, zur Empörung auf, so daß der König seine Zuflucht zu den Engländern nehmen mußte, um sich und seinen Thron zu retten.

Diese Ereignisse und die daraus entstandene große Verwirrung des Reiches machten es mir unmöglich, meine Reise in die Gebirge von Afghanistan auszuführen und zwangen mich nach Calcutta zurückzukehren.[1]

Ueber einen der Volksstämme, welche dieses Land bewohnen, wurde mir in Calcutta ein sonderbarer Gebrauch mitgetheilt. Am Ufer des Ganges wohnt der Stamm der Barbarinaden (Barbaren), welcher die Todten nicht zur Erde bestattet, sondern aufs Feld wirft. Ihre Kranken behandeln die Barbarinaden ebenfalls sehr einfach: man fährt mit den Schwererkrankten in einem Boote bis zur Mitte des Flusses, faßt sie dann an die Ohren und taucht sie dreimal ins Wasser. Sterben sie bei dieser Procedur, so wirft man sie in den Fluß; überleben sie dieselbe aber, so führt man sie wieder zu Hause. Sobald ein Kranker genesen ist, bekleidet man ihn mit einem langen weißen Gewande, umgürtet ihn mit einem Strick, giebt ihm einen Wanderstab in die Hand und zwingt ihn ohne Aufenthalt fortzuwandern, einem Cain gleich umherzuirren, ohne jemals wieder in seine Heimath zurückkehren zu dürfen. — Der Ganges trägt zuweilen die Leichen, welche dieser Volksstamm ins Wasser geworfen hat, bis nach Calcutta.

Das, was mir die Juden in Kabul über die Bewohner in den Gebirgen von Afghanistan erzählten, stimmt mit dem überein, was der Courier-Litewski vom 8. October 1828 berichtet. Diese in Wilna erscheinende Zeitung theilt über den Gegenstand folgendes mit: „Die Bewohner Afghanistans stammen von den zehn Stämmen her, und belaufen sich auf 4,300,000 Seelen, welche sämmtlich Nomaden sind. Sie bilden ein selbstständiges Volk, das seinen Fürsten und seine Regierung hat und dessen Tapfer-

[1] In der französischen Ausgabe dieses Werkes ist diese Stelle undeutlich ausgedrückt.

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keit in seinen mit den Engländern geführten Kriegen bewährt ist.“[1]

Ich hoffe bei meiner demnächstigen zweiten Reise dieses Land genauer durchforschen zu können und flehe den Ewigen an, meine Schritte dorthin zu lenken.

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[1] Ritter's Erdkunde, 3. Buch, 8. Th., S. 189. Die Juden gehören zu den merkwürdigsten dieser Fremdlinge in Afghanistan, deren Zahl daselbst sehr bedeutend ist. Man hält sie für Nachkommen der zehn Stämme Israels, welche in medische Gefangenschaft gerathen, nicht wieder nach Jerusalem zurückkehrten, sondern später im Anfange des Khalifats, wie viele nestorianische Christengemeinden Hoch-Asiens, dem Schwerte Mahomeds erlagen oder sich ihm ergaben; diejenigen, welche, wie Bochara (bis zu ihnen drang B. von Tudela vor; S. 83), Kaschmir und Afghanistan widerstanden, erduldeten grausame Verfolgungen; die größere Zahl unterwarf sich. Viele, welche dem Glauben ihrer Väter getreu blieben, zogen sich auf das äußerste Hochland zurück. Die Afghanen meinen, daß sie selbst Nachkommen Israels, nach Vansittart (in Asiat. Res. T. 2.) unmittelbare Nachkommen König Sauls seien. Buchanan hält dafür, diejenige wirklich von den Juden herstammende Zahl der Afghanen könne immer nicht groß sein, da deren Stämme selbst in Sprache, Gesichtsbildung, Religion so sehr verschieden sind. In Kabul leben gegenwärtig sehr viele Juden, deren Handelsgeschäfte sie durch ganz Hoch-Asien bis China führen. Einige sechzig dieser alten Judencolonien werden durch ganz Hoch-Asien, Indien und China genannt, welche unter einander in dem lebhaftesten und schnellsten Verkehr stehen sollen. Kein Ort konnte als Verbindungsglied zu diesem gelegener sein als Kabul. Buchanan zeigt, daß es zweierlei Judenstämme in Hinter-Asien gebe, die alten oder dunkelfarbigen Juden, welche kaum von den Hindus zu unterscheiden sind und jenseit des Indus wohnen, und die hellfarbigen, welche ihrer eigenen Aussage nach, erst seit der zweiten Zerstörung des Tempels hier einwanderten. Al. Burnes hat uns über diese Juden in Kabul keine neue Nachrichten mitgetheilt.

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Capitel 24.

Die Juden in China.

Von Kabul nach Calcutta. — Reise nach China. — Singapore. — Notizen über den Zustand der Juden in China. — Auszug aus der Mikwe Israel. — Notiz aus der Zeitung für Norddeutschland. — Menasse ben Israel.

Von Kabul reiste ich nach Allahabad, Mirzapur, Benares und Patna nach Calcutta. Ich halte es für unnöthig, dem Leser etwas über Calcutta zu berichten, da ich nur Bekanntes erzählen könnte. Was meine Glaubensgenossen anlangt, von denen dort 1500 Familien leben, so kann ich darüber ebenfalls nichts Neues mittheilen. Sie leben in freien und glücklichen Verhältnissen, besitzen theilweise großartige Handelsgeschäfte und stimmen in ihren Sitten und Gebräuchen mit den Juden von Bagdad überein. Sie sind alle sehr gebildet, haben indeß keine bestimmte Chachamim; einer der reichsten Geschäftsleute der Stadt, Hesekiel Jehuda, Jacob Sliman, ein sehr aufgeklärter Mann und tüchtiger Talmudist, versieht die Geschäfte des Chacham. Einige der reichsten unserer Glaubensbrüder sind: Josef Esra Kalifi, Ruben Isaac Sekar, Hesekiel Esra Kalifi und Sason David.

Ich schiffte mich in Calcutta auf einem der indischen Compagnie gehörenden Schiffe ein und segelte nach Singapore, woselbst ich nach einer sehr schwierigen Fahrt von 25 Tagen anlangte. Es befindet sich dort eine kleine jüdische Gemeinde, deren Vorsteher die Söhne des obengenannten Hesekiel Jehuda in Calcutta sind. Obgleich ich nur sehr kurze Zeit in Singapore blieb, so hatte ich doch Gelegenheit, die Bekanntschaft mehrer der dort ansässigen Juden zu machen, von denen ich indeß nichts besonders Bemerkenswerthes erfahren habe.

Trotz meiner in Folge der mühseligen Reise eingetretenen Unpäßlichkeit entschloß ich mich, mit einem englischen Paketboot

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nach Canton zu fahren, wozu wir acht Tage gebrauchten. Unter der Reisegesellschaft hatte ich einen Glaubensgenossen aus Bombay, welcher sich ebenfalls nach Canton begab. In der Stadt Canton selbst wohnen keine ansässigen Juden, indeß findet man durchreisende Handelsleute aus den entferntesten Gegenden. Gleich nach meiner Ankunft warf mich ein heftiges Fieber aufs Krankenlager, so daß ich zwanzig Tage das Bett hüten mußte, und da ich meine Krankheit dem dortigen Klima zuschrieb, so schiffte ich mich bald wieder zur Abreise nach Bombay ein, woselbst angelangt sich meine Gesundheit wirklich besserte.

Der ganze Vortheil, der durch diese Reise nach China für mein Werk erwachsen war, beschränkte sich auf einige Erkundigungen, die ich bei meinen Glaubensgenossen einzog. Von ihnen erfuhr ich, daß in der Umgegend von Canton keine Juden wohnen, doch daß jenseit des gelben Flusses eine Völkerschaft existire, welche alle zwei bis drei Jahre eine bedeutende Karawane nach Canton sende, um Gewürze, Colonialwaaren, Farbenproducte, Thee und andere Landeserzeugnisse dorthin zu bringen. Die zu dieser Karawane gehörenden Leute sind unter dem Namen Havaia oder Havaisten bekannt und gelten für Juden. In der That bezeichnet das hebräische Wort „Havaia“ (von J. H. W. H. abstammend) „ewig, unsterblich“, so daß also Havaisten in diesem Lande, wo man die Menschen nach ihrem Cultus benennt, die Anbeter des Ewigen bezeichnen würde, ein Name, der für die mosaische Secte sehr charakteristisch ist. Ich wage es jedoch nicht, durch diese Uebersetzung eines Wortes die Abstammung dieser Völkerschaft zu beweisen; um sie indeß wichtiger zu machen, führe ich den bereits oben citirten Vers aus Jesaias an: „Diese da werden von Tschina kommen.“ Tschina ist den glaubwürdigsten Berichten nach China.

Ich wäre ohne Zweifel in meinen Nachforschungen glücklicher gewesen, wenn ich es vermocht hätte, dieselben persönlich anzustellen, und führe aus Mangel an eigenen Berichten hier eine wichtige Mittheilung über die Juden in China an, den Brief eines dort befindlichen Glaubensgenossen, welchen ich der Güte des Herrn Oberrabbiner Aron Arnauld in Straßburg verdanke, dessen Vetter der Verfasser des Briefes ist, den ich hier wörtlich

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mittheile nebst dem Certificate über seine Authenticität. Der Brief lautet folgendermaßen:

„Ich habe voriges Jahr und seitdem noch einmal vor einigen Tagen chinesische Juden gesehen. Sie waren aus ihrem besonderen Stadtviertel in Kai-fang-fu in der Provinz Ko-Namri gekommen, einer Einladung mehrer dort wohnenden arabischen Israeliten, sowie einiger englischen Missionäre folgend, welche letzteren sich genaue Nachrichten über sie und zugleich hebräische Manuscripte oder Bücher verschaffen wollten. Die Reisenden statteten mir einen Besuch ab und ich hatte mehre Unterredungen mit ihnen in hebräischer Sprache. Sie sind in China und namentlich in der Provinz, welche sie bewohnen, unter dem Namen Pau-Kyin-Kian bekannt, was heißen soll „Gläubige der Adern-Ausreißer". Sie stammen nach ihrer Behauptung aus einem Lande, welches sie Jou-Tak (Juda) nennen, und sind vor etwa 1850 Jahren unter der Kaiserdynastie Khann eingewandert. Ein anderer Stammbaum über sie läßt sich ungefähr 800 Jahre verfolgen. Ein chinesischer Kaiser ließ ihnen eine Synagoge erbauen, welche jetzt in Trümmern liegt. Sie halten an ihrer Religion mit der Festigkeit, welche die Juden bis heute auszeichnet, und heirathen nur Frauen ihres eigenen Glaubens. Doch besitzen sie seit 40 Jahren keine Rabbinen mehr, weil sie zu arm sind, dieselben zu erhalten. Sie lesen nicht hebräisch und das ganze jetzige Geschlecht ist unbeschnitten, weil es ihnen an fähigen Männern fehlt, welche die Beschneidung verrichten können, doch sind sie nicht ganz unwissend in ihren Gebräuchen, die mit den unsrigen ganz übereinstimmen. Sie haben mir mehre hebräische Bücher gelassen und versprochen, mir eine Abschrift ihrer in chinesischen Buchstaben geschriebenen Steintafeln zu geben, welche auf ihre Wanderung Bezug haben. Auch besitzen sie den Sefer Thora (Pentateuch), Tephilim (zu den Ceremonien der Tagesgebete), Zizith und Arba Kanfoth. Sie beabsichtigen einen oder zwei Knaben hierherzuführen, um sie von den arabischen Israeliten im Hebräischen und in den Gebräuchen unseres Cultus unterrichten zu lassen. Während der Kriege der Tartaren mit den Chinesen hat sich ein Theil von ihnen nach der benachbarten Provinz Sche-Kiang begeben, und sich

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in Kang-Tschu ansässig gemacht, welche Stadt ich zu besuchen beabsichtige. Ein anderer Theil ging nach Arnoy in der Provinz Fo-Kien. In Peking und in ganz China sind diese Heimathlosen zerstreut, und leben überall in derselben Erniedrigung und Unwissenheit. In Kang-Tschu und Arnoy befinden sich keine Synagogen. In Kai-fang-fu beläuft sich ihre Zahl auf beinahe 10,000, in Tschang-Tschu zwischen 1000 und 2000; in Arnoy sind sie zahlreicher.

Ihre Gesichtszüge sind denen der Mongolen ähnlich; diejenigen, welche ich gesehen habe, sind sehr geistreich und in Bezug auf ihre chinesische Bildung und Wissenschaft wohl unterrichtet, sie sprechen die Sprache der Mandarinen und bedienen sich noch einiger biblischer Namen, wie Moses, Aron ꝛc., auch kennen sie die Namen Jerusalem und Mizraim (Egypten), woher sie sagen, daß sie gekommen sind; auch erzählen sie die Sklaverei der Juden in Egypten und besitzen einzelne Bruchstücke unserer Geschichte, Religion, Sitten und Gebräuche, welche sie aus der Tradition entlehnt haben.

Die englischen Missionäre haben sich eines in dem Besitz dieser Juden befindlichen sehr alten Pentateuchs bemächtigt und denselben nach England versandt, indem sie dieselben erst glauben machten, daß sie ihn nur zu besichtigen und abzuschreiben wünschten und ihnen dann sagten, daß sie ihn kaufen wollten. Da nun mit der von den englischen Missionären gesandten Geldsumme Betrügereien vorgenommen waren, so verlangten die Juden die Zurückgabe des Pentateuchs, welchen man nach England gesandt zu haben vorgab. Sie sind dieses Jahr wieder hierher gekommen, um die Sache zu ordnen, damit sie sich bei ihrer Gemeinde rechtfertigen können, und verlangen mit Recht die Rückerstattung ihrer Werke, indem sie sich weigern Geld dafür anzunehmen und sagen, daß sie dieselben weder verkaufen können noch wollen. Endlich wollen sie selbst die Rücksendung ihrer Bücher aus England abwarten, doch die Missionäre verweigern ihnen jede Erstattung in Geld oder in anderer Art. Die Juden aber wollen nun in drei Monaten wiederkommen und ihre Klage beim englischen Gesandten geltend machen."

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Dieſe Notiz iſt ein wörtlicher Auszug aus einem Briefe meines Vetters Aron.

Straßburg, 13. November 1855.

Aron Arnauld, Oberrabiner.

Das franzöſiſche Original lautet:

J'ai vu ici l'année passée, et depuis, une seconde fois, il y a quelques jours, des coréligionnaires chinois. Ils sont venus de leur quartier principal de Kaï-fang-fou dans la province du Ko-Namri, pour se rendre à l'invitation de quelques Israélites arabes résidant ici, ainsi que de missionnaires anglais. Ces derniers désiraient se procurer des renseignements exactes et des manuscrits ou des livres hébreux. Les voyageurs sont venus me voir, et j'ai eu avec eux plusieurs conversations en chinois. Ils sont connus en Chine, et particulièrement dans la province qu'ils habitent, sous le nom de *Pan-Kyin-Kian*, ce qui signifie: *Religion des arracheurs de veines*, ou comme on l'a traduit en anglais: *Pluck sinew religion.* Ils sont originaires d'une contrée qu'ils prononçaient: *You Tâk* (Juda), il y a 1850 ans, sous la dynastie *Khann.* Une seconde colonne les a suivis, il y a environ 800 ans. Un empereur chinois leur a bâti une synagogue, qui est à présent négligée et tombée de vétusté. Ils observent leur foi avec cette tenacité caractéristique qui distingue la race des Hébreux, encore aujourd'hui, ils n'épousent que des femmes de leur propre réligion. Mais, depuis plus de 40 ans, ils n'ont plus de Rabbins, étant trop pauvres pour les entretenir. Ils ne savent plus lire l'hébreu, et la plupart de cette génération, ou plutôt la génération entière de notre temps, n'est point circoncise, n'ayant point de circonciseurs. Ils ne sont cependant pas trop ignorants des rites, qui sont parfaitement d'accord avec les nôtres. Ils m'ont laissé quelques livres hébreux, et m'ont promis de m'envoyer une copie de tablettes de pierres, en chinois, qui ont rapport à leur émigration. Ils ont aussi le *Séphar-Thora*, *Thephilin*, *Zizis*, *Arba-Kanfoth.* Ils ont l'intention d'amener un ou deux petits garçons que ces Israélites arabes instruiront dans l'hébreu et dans les rites de notre culte. Pendant la guerre de Tartares et de Chinois, une partie d'entre eux s'est transportée dans la province de *Che-Kiang*, voisine de celle où est située notre ville, et s'est établie à *Kang-Tchou*, cité que je me propose d'aller visiter, et une autre partie est à *Arnoy*, dans la province Fo-Kien. Il existe de ces émigrés également à *Pékin* et par toute la Chine, mais toujours dans le même état de décadence et d'ignorance. A *Kang-Tchou* et *Arnoy* ils n'ont point de synagogue. Leur nombre à *Kaï-fang-fou* monte environ à 10,000; à *Kang-Tchou* il est de 1000 à 2000; ils sont plus nombreux à *Arnoy.* On m'avait amené aussi un Israélite de *Kang-Tchou.* Leurs

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traits sont presqu' entièrement conformes au type de la race des *Mongols*. Ceux que j'ai vus ici sont très-intelligents et bien instruits, j'entends en fait d'éducation et d'instruction chinoise. Ils ne parlent que le *mandarin*, mais ils se servent encore de noms bibliques, tels que Moïse, Aaron etc. Ils savent aussi les noms de Mizraïm, Jérusalem, d'où ils disent être venus, racontent l'esclavage et les servitudes des Hébreux en Egypte, enfin ils possèdent des fragments, des débris de notre histoire, de notre religion, de nos moeurs et de nos coutumes: notions qui leur ont été conservées uniquement par tradition.

Les missionnaires anglais ont accaparé des *Sephar-Thora*, très antiques, et les ont envoyés en Angleterre; je dis accaparé, car les Chinois que les missionnaires ont envoyés à *Kaï-fang-fou* ne leur disaient pas que l'on voulait les acheter, et leur faisaient accroire que l'on ne désirait que les voir ou les copier. Quant à l'argent envoyé par les missionnaires anglais, comme il y avait eu des malversations, les Israélites, avant leur départ, demandaient la restitution des *Sephar-Thora* qu'on leur a dit avoir été envoyés en Angleterre. Ils sont revenus cette année-ci pour tâcher d'arranger cette affaire, afin de se justifier vis-à-vis de leur communauté. Ils réclament avec justice la restitution des livres, et refusent d'accepter de l'argent, en disant qu'ils ne peuvent et ne veulent pas les vendre. — Enfin ils consentent à attendre qu'on les ait fait revenir d'Angleterre; mais les missionnaires leur refusent toute satisfaction, soit en argent, soit autrement. Ils comptent revenir encore dans trois mois pour faire valoir leurs réclamations auprès du consul anglais.

Cette notice est extraite littéralement d'une lettre écrite par mon cousin Aaron.

Strasbourg, le 13 novembre 1855.

Aaron Arnauld, Grand-Rabbin.

Auch im „Mikwe Israel“ findet ſich eine Nachricht über die Juden in China, ein Bericht des Miſſionärs Matthias Bachia, welchen wir in der erſten Ausgabe dieſes Werkes mitgetheilt haben und auf den wir hier, da er faſt allgemein bekannt iſt, nur hinweiſen.

Wir leſen in der am Druckorte dieſes Werkes erſcheinenden „Zeitung für Norddeutſchland“ (Nr. 2797, Abendausgabe vom

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1. März 1858) eine Notiz über die Juden in China, welche wir als Bestätigung unserer obigen Mittheilung hier anhängen. Der Artikel lautet:

„Man wußte seit länger, daß in Kai-fang-fu in Ho-nan sich eine jüdische Colonie befinde. Die katholischen Missionäre haben im vorigen Jahrhundert 1704 und 1774 über dieselbe bereits Nachrichten gegeben. Eine große Geldsumme, welche eine Lady der London Society for Christianizing Jews übergab, um Nachforschungen über diese im Lande anzustellen, veranlaßte den Bischof von Honkong, Dr. Smiths, 1850, durch die London Missionary Society zu Schanghai diese Nachforschungen anstellen zu lassen, und diese sandte am 25. November 1850 zwei intelligente bekehrte Chinesen zu dem Ende aus. Da Schanghai nur 600 englische Meilen von Kai-fung entfernt ist, kamen die Chinesen schon nach wenigen Tagen heim und brachten zwei chinesische Juden, einen 40 und einen 45 Jahre alt, einen von echt jüdischen Zügen, mit zurück. Außer ihrer Beschneidung und Religion waren sie in Sprache, Tracht, Sitten und Gebräuchen ganz zu Chinesen geworden, führten auch chinesische Namen. Das Interessanteste, was sie mitbrachten, waren acht Manuscripte mit Stücken des alten Testaments in hebräischer Sprache, meist in großen Rollen, wenige in kleiner Buchform, auf sehr dickem Pergament oder auf Schaffellen deutlich geschrieben mit Vocalpunkten. Das Manuscript von Exod. 1—6 stimmt mit unseren Ausgaben. Sie besitzen wenig mehr als die Bücher Mosis. Die Juden sollen vom Nordwesten Indiens etwa im dritten Jahrhundert nach Christo nach China gekommen sein, und sich erst heimlich in Ninghia, Hantscheu und Peking aufgehalten haben, ließen sich aber später in Kai-fung-fu nieder; 1163 erlaubte Kaiser Hiao-tsung ihnen, da eine Synagoge zu bauen. 1446 bei einer großen Ueberschwemmung wurden ihre meisten Bücher und Rollen unleserlich, und die Juden von Ning-po und Ning-hia ersetzten sie; 1573 bis 1620 verbrannte die Synagoge mit den Büchern, und 1742 verheerte eine Ueberschwemmung die Stadt, und sie kauften den Taking (die fünf Bücher Mosis) von einem Mahomedaner aus Ning-hia, der sie von einem Juden in Canton hatte. Dies Buch

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ſah P. Kögler. Ihrer ſind jetzt etwa 200 Individuen in und um Kai-fung-fu. Ihre Familiennamen ſind ganz chineſiſch. Wenige halten Läden, einige ſind Bauern; die Mehrzahl aber iſt ſo verarmt, ohne Kleidung und Obdach, daß ſie das Material der Synagoge verkaufen, um ſich das Leben zu friſten. Sie feiern den Sabbath Sonnabends. Die Knaben werden binnen einem Monat nach ihrer Geburt beſchnitten. Sie waſchen den Leib, bevor ſie die Synagoge (Li-pai-ſu), die aus drei Schiffen beſteht, betreten, zu welchem Zwecke an jeder Seite des Heiligthums ein Bad iſt. Beim Gottesdienſt wenden ſie das Geſicht nach Weſten, Jeruſalem zu. Ein hebräiſcher Lehrer ſoll vor fünfzig Jahren geſtorben ſein; jetzt kann keiner mehr hebräiſch leſen. Die Juden konnten in China, wie die Mahomedaner, zu allen Aemtern und Ehren gelangen. Gott nennen ſie wie die Chineſen „Schangtti.“ Nach dem Muſter der Chineſen ehren ſie in ihrem Betſaal auch ihre heiligen Männer (Tſching-jin), wie Abraham und Andere. So unbedeutend die Colonie an ſich iſt, ſo merkwürdig iſt ſie doch, indem ſie zeigt, wie das Chineſenthum ſelbſt die ſtarre Nationalität der Juden einigermaßen bewältigt.“

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Capitel 25.

Mittheilungen über die Juden von Yemin (Yemen), in Afghanistan und der Tartarei.

(Nach Mittheilungen von Reisegefährten.)

Aus der mehrfach erwähnten Chronik, welche sich im „Mikwe Israel“ befindet, geht hervor, daß die Juden von Yemen in Arabien gleichfalls von den zehn Stämmen herkommen. Es ist möglich, daß die in dem Lande zerstreuten Glaubensgenossen, nachdem sie eine Zeitlang unter dem Drucke barbarischer Herrscher und Völker von dem Glauben der Väter abzufallen gezwungen waren, in späteren Zeiten wieder zum Mosaismus zurückgekehrt sind und nun bis auf den heutigen Tag demselben anhangen; denn ich habe keine Angabe darüber gefunden, daß sich seitdem Juden in diesen Ländern niedergelassen haben.

Ich habe über dieselben folgende Berichte gesammelt. Im Jahre 1522 fand der dänische Schiffscapitän Nibuar, von König Friedrich V. ausgesandt, in Yemen und namentlich in der Hauptstadt Sana, wo er fast 2000 Seelen zählte, viele Juden, über welche er höchst interessante Berichte lieferte.

Im Jahre 1846 bei meiner Anwesenheit in Kairo wohnte ich in einer Karawanen-Herberge mit drei Juden aus Sana zusammen, von welchen der eine ziemlich im Hebräischen unterrichtet war. Ich befragte sie unter anderm über ihre Lage und Herkunft, worauf sie mir erwiederten, daß ihre Vorfahren seit der Zerstörung des ersten Tempels dort ansässig seien.

In Bombay machte ich im Jahre 1849 die Bekanntschaft mit einem Chacham aus demselben Orte, der zu der obigen Angabe noch Folgendes hinzufügte. Die Juden von Sana hätten durch Tradition von ihren Vorfahren gehört, daß Esra nach seinem Besuche von Babylon die Verbannten von Yemen besucht habe, um sie zur Rückkehr in ihr Vaterland zu veranlassen. Diese aber

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hätten sich geweigert, da sie annahmen, diese Befreiung sei nicht von derselben Allgemeinheit und Dauer, wie die aus der ägyptischen Dienstbarkeit, und weil sie sich nicht einer nochmaligen Verfolgung aussetzen wollten. Esra habe im Zorn über diese Weigerung einen Fluch über sie ausgesprochen und ihnen fortwährendes Elend und Unterdrückung geweissagt. Sie aber hätten Esra gelästert und geflucht, und Gott beschworen ihm nicht zu gestatten, daß er Jerusalem wiedersehe. — Dieser Doppelfluch scheint sich erfüllt zu haben: Esra's Grab befindet sich in der Wüste zwischen Bagdad und Bassora, wie wir oben mitgetheilt, und die Juden von Yemen schmachten in der grausamsten Erniedrigung und tiefsten Armuth bis auf den heutigen Tag.

Der dänische Capitän, den wir oben erwähnt haben, erzählt auch, daß in der Umgegend von Sana und im glücklichen Arabien sich viele Juden finden, welche inmitten der Wüste in einem Staate unabhängiger Stämme wohnen.

Zur Zeit des Maimonides schon wußte man von der Existenz der Juden in diesen Gegenden; denn ich selbst habe die Abschrift eines Briefes besessen, welcher an die Juden von Yemen gerichtet war. Jedenfalls hat man bis heute nicht daran gedacht, sich über unsere Glaubensgenossen in diesen Gegenden zu unterrichten.

In Bombay wurde ich mit einem Juden aus Bagdad bekannt, der Persien durchreist und sich dort ein kleines Vermögen erworben hatte. Er theilte mir über unsere Glaubensgenossen Folgendes mit.

Im Jahre 1847 war er von Teheran aus in Begleitung eines andern Juden mit einer Partie Waaren nach Buchara in der kleinen Tartarei gezogen. Auf der Hälfte des Weges, achtzehn Tagereisen von Teheran, liegt Mesched, von da nach Buchara sind ungefähr zweiundzwanzig Tagereisen, und von letzterer Stadt bis nach Kabul erstreckt sich eine große Wüste, welche von mehren theils seßhaften, theils nomadischen Volksstämmen bewohnt wird, deren einige alte biblische Namen tragen. So findet man dort die Hagriim, von denen die Bibel erzählt, daß sie mit den Stämmen Ruben, Gad und dem halben Stamme Manasse Krieg führ-

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ten und wahrscheinlich diese Stämme nach Chalach und Chabor fortführten,[1] die Togarnim und Aramim.

Diese wilden und doch gastfreien Völkerschaften plündern die Karawanen und führen die Reisenden, sobald sie sich widersetzen und einen Kampf eingehen, in die Sklaverei. — Die Karawane, mit welcher unser Reisender durch die Wüste zog, erlag einem solchen Schicksale und die Sieger führten die übrig gebliebenen Reisenden in ihr Dorf. Dort wurden sie untersucht, ob nicht Jemand aus einem befreundeten Stamme unter ihnen sei, wobei auch die Reihe an unsern Reisenden und seinen Begleiter kam, welche beide erklärten, daß sie Juden seien, und von denen sich mein Bekannter für einen Hakim-Baschi ausgab. Sein Herr bezeugte viele Freude darüber, gab ihm eine anständige Wohnung und behandelte ihn sehr ehrerbietig. Der andere Jude aber, der sich keines Titels zu rühmen hatte und nicht wissenschaftlich gebildet war, wurde sehr strenge behandelt und mußte als Sklave das Feld bearbeiten. Der vorgebliche Arzt hatte fortwährend Patienten zu heilen und der Zufall begünstigte ihn bei seinen Kuren. So verliefen sechs Monate ohne die mindeste Aenderung im Zustande der beiden Gefangenen. Unser Reisender hatte jedoch bemerkt, daß sein Gebieter sehr geldgierig war, und benutzte dies, indem er ihm eines Tages sagte: „Welchen Vortheil hast du davon, mich zu unterhalten? (Die Patienten zahlten nämlich nichts.) Wenn etwa in der Umgegend meine Glaubensbrüder wohnen, so führe mich und meinen Bruder zu ihnen, sie werden uns auslösen."

Sein Gebieter erklärte darauf, daß sechs Tagereisen entfernt in der Wüste Juden wohnten, mit welchen sein Stamm in Frieden lebe, und zeigte sich nach einigem Zureden bereit, seine beiden Gefangenen dorthin zu führen. In Begleitung mehrer Gefährten machte er sich mit ihnen auf den Weg und kam zu dem Dorfe der Juden, vor welchem angelangt er die Gefangenen unter Obhut seiner Begleiter zurückließ und sich zum Oberhaupte des Orts begab. Als der letztere hörte, daß ein paar Glaubensbrüder gefangen seien, eilte er sofort vor das Dorf zu ihnen. Er fragte sie, aus welchem Lande sie wären, worauf unser Reisender antwortete,

[1] 1. Buch der Chronica Cap. 5, V. 19. 20. 26.

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sie kämen von Babel (Bagdad). „Der Name Babel ist uns bekannt," erwiderte der Jude, „denn wir wissen, daß unsere Väter einst dort gefangen waren, doch haben wir niemals einen Bewohner dieses Landes gesehen." — Nach so gemachter Bekanntschaft handelte es sich um das Lösegeld, wobei der Herr der beiden Gefangenen eine übermäßige Summe forderte. Der Vorsteher des jüdischen Dorfes aber erklärte: „Wir wollen dir für diese beiden Männer die gewöhnlichen Preise zahlen, willst du das nicht, so werden wir sie dir mit Gewalt abnehmen." Da diese Drohung durch zahlreich hinzugekommene Ortsbewohner unterstützt wurde, so ward man bald einig, und für beide Gefangene wurde ein Lösegeld von 1200 Karan (eine persische Silbermünze, 5 Piaster an Werth, also 6000 Piaster) bezahlt. Die Befreiten wurden darauf mit Jubel in das Dorf geführt.

Unser Reisender erkundigte sich, ob in der Nähe noch andere jüdische Völkerschaften wohnten, und erhielt den Bescheid, daß sich in einer Entfernung von zehn Tagereisen mehre jüdische Stämme befänden, der Weg zu ihnen jedoch durch die räuberischen Nomadenhorden sehr gefährlich sei; wenn er indeß diese Glaubensbrüder besuchen wolle, so möge er warten, bis eine starke Karawane vorüberziehe, die ihn mitnehme. Aus Furcht, nochmals in Gefangenschaft zu gerathen, blieb er. Man bot ihm eine Frau, ein Haus und ein Stück Feld an, und bat ihn, sich bei ihnen niederzulassen, was unser Reisender indeß abschlug, da er schon verheirathet sei und sich nach seiner Familie zurücksehne. Man tröstete ihn und sagte ihm, er möge sich gedulden, von Zeit zu Zeit ziehe eine Karawane vorbei, welcher sich stets einige Juden anschlössen, mit einer solchen möge er abreisen. Nach zweimonatlichem sehnsüchtigen Warten kam endlich eine Karawane und unser Reisender schloß sich derselben an, sein Gefährte indeß, der sich während dieser Zeit verheirathet hatte, blieb zurück. Nach einer gefahrvollen Reise von 17 Tagen langte er in Kabul an, begab sich von da nach Calcutta und später nach Bombay, wo ich ihn kennen lernte.

Bei meiner Anwesenheit in Kabul erhielt ich durch einen dortigen Glaubensgenossen die Bestätigung der obigen Erzählung und erfuhr, daß die Juden von Balach, dreizehn Tagereisen von Kabul, ihn losgekauft hatten.

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Auf meine Hauptfrage über die Herkunft dieser Stämme und die Zeit ihrer Niederlassung in der Wüste konnte mir der Jude keine Auskunft geben. In meinen geraubten Notizen hatte ich einige nähere Umstände angemerkt, welche mir indeß jetzt entfallen sind. — Es irren also noch heute jüdische Völkerschaften unter den Nomadenstämmen der Wüste umher.

Ich trat in Bombay mit einem Glaubensgenossen aus Buchara, Namens Messias, in Beziehungen, durch welchen ich einige Auskunft über die dort wohnenden Juden erhielt. Mein Bekannter hatte aus Buchara flüchten müssen, weil er einem englischen Missionär einen Zufluchtsort bei sich gegeben hatte; er wurde von der verrätherischen Polizei des Herrschers von Buchara verfolgt, der keinem Europäer den Zutritt zu seinem Lande gestattet, noch weniger die Verbreitung von Büchern genehmigt. Der gerettete Missionär hatte ihm später einen Brief voll der lebhaftesten Dankesäußerungen geschrieben, den ich selbst gesehen habe. — Er erzählte mir, daß in Buchara und in der Umgegend beinahe 2500 jüdische Familien wohnen, welche sich mit Handel, Ackerbau und Handarbeit ernähren. Sie sind gezwungen an ihren Kleidern ein Stück alten Stoffs zu tragen, wodurch sie sich von den Tartaren unterscheiden. Auch theilte er mir mit, daß im Norden des Landes, nahe der russischen Grenze, eine große Anzahl Juden wohnen, eine Thatsache, welche durch andere Reisende in jenen Gegenden bestätigt wird. Man weiß von ihnen, daß sie dort seit mehren Jahrhunderten ansässig sind und früher den mächtigen benachbarten Königen die Spitze geboten haben.[1]

Ein israelitischer Kaufmann aus Tabur, den ich im Jahre 1850 in Teheran traf, erzählte mir, daß in dieser Stadt und den umliegenden Districten gegen 12,000 jüdische Familien wohnten, und fügte hinzu, daß in der großen Tartarei die Juden Städte erbaut hätten, deren Namen er mir nannte. Die Zeit ihrer Nie-

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[1] Pethachia, S. 170, anerkennt die Juden in der Tartarei nicht als eigentliche Juden, weil sie die talmudischen Gebräuche nicht befolgen.

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derlassung falle in das 6. Jahrhundert; von den Chinesen verfolgt, welche sie zwingen wollten, ihren Glauben zu verlassen, hätten sie sich in der großen Tartarei angesiedelt und lebten dort frei und im besten Einvernehmen mit den Eingeborenen. Die Oberhäupter würden gleichmäßig unter Juden und Tartaren gewählt und beide theilten die Gefahren des Krieges, doch schlössen die Juden keine Ehen mit den Tartaren und hielten strenge auf ihren Cultus; bemerkenswerth sei es, daß sie alle vom Stamme Ruben herzukommen glauben. — Ich fragte ihn darauf, ob sie die heilige Schrift, Gebetbücher oder Leitfaden zur Anordnung des Cultus besäßen, worauf er mir erwiderte, ein polnischer Jude, der vor etwa 40 Jahren zu ihnen gekommen sei, habe ihnen eine vollständige Bibel gebracht, welche sie indeß nicht lesen konnten; derselbe habe dann mehren unter ihnen Unterricht ertheilt und ihnen später Bibeln und Pentateuche gesandt. — Sie verrichten einige unserer praktischen Religionsübungen, ohne den innern Sinn derselben zu kennen: aber sie haben ein festes Vertrauen in ihrem Glauben. Im Uebrigen stehen sie mit der ganzen Welt in durchaus keiner Verbindung, ja sie wußten nicht einmal, daß in Europa ebenfalls Juden wohnen. — Der Tag, an welchem sie die sämmtlichen Schriften erhielten, wurde als ein Festtag von ihnen begangen.

Während meiner Reisen in Afrika traf ich selbst den oben erwähnten polnischen Juden; er wohnt in Algier und heißt Simcha Rubinstein. Aus seinem Munde erhielt ich die Bestätigung der vorstehenden Mittheilungen des Juden auch Buchara. — Die Berichte über dieses Land sind so zweifelhaft, es wird so selten besucht und ist so wenig bekannt, daß ich es als ein Glück ansah, eine treue Schilderung über die dortigen Juden zu erhalten; die Bestätigung Rubinsteins, der gründliche Kenntnisse der hebräischen und anderer Sprachen besaß, und lange Jahre in diesen fernen Regionen gereist war, war für mich eine schätzenswerthe Bürgschaft. Wie ich selbst, so hatte auch er das Unglück, bei seiner Rückkehr aus Tombuctu in der Wüste Sahara seiner sämmtlichen Notizen bei einer Karawanenplünderung beraubt zu werden.

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Salomon ſagt: „Sorgen zerreißen das Herz, aber ein freundliches Wort erfreuet es!“[1]

Meine Sorgen ſind keine perſönliche. — Die große Vergangenheit und die unſterblichen Thaten des Volkes, dem ich angehöre, beſchäftigen mich gänzlich. Meine Gedanken ſind auf die in der Welt zerſtreuten Ueberreſte deſſelben gerichtet, die das Schickſal bisher vor unſeren Augen verbarg. Mein Zweck iſt, die große Familie Iſraels aufzuſuchen, die ſich oft nicht erkennt und in ſo vielen Ländern das Brod der Verbannung von Egypten und Babylon genießt, es mit ſeinen Thränen benetzt und mit ſeinem Blute befeuchtet. Ich will ihnen Worte der Wahrheit, Worte des Troſtes zurufen und mit der Fackel unſerer heiligen Geſchichte in der Hand Licht unter ſie tragen; der Ewige, der Alles ſieht und kennt, hat auch meine Thaten geſehen, keine meiner Abſichten und meiner Wünſche iſt ihm unbekannt. Er wird mich leiten und ſchützen, er wird mir Muth und Kraft verleihen, das begonnene Werk auszuführen. Er wird meine Glaubensgenoſſen beſeelen, daß ſie mir helfen, damit ich von Neuem meine Schritte nach dieſen heiligen Orten, den Stätten des Ruhmes unſerer Vorfahren wenden kann. Er leite mich vom Occident, wo meine Brüder alles was ſchön und erhaben iſt kennen, nach dem Orient, wo ſo viele Geſchlechter in Unwiſſenheit und Elend ſchmachten. — Ich wende mich an alle wiſſenſchaftlich gebildeten Männer mit dieſer Bitte und ſchließe mit Salomon: „Die Hoffnung, die auf ſich warten läßt, erfüllt das Herz mit Unruhe.“[2] — „Da, wo das Werk beginnt, iſt Ueberfluß; doch wo nur Worte ſind, läßt ſich der Mangel fühlen.“[3].

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[1] Sprüche Salomonis Cap. 12, V. 25.
[2] Sprüche Salomonis Cap. 13, V. 12.
[3] Daſelbſt Cap. 14, V. 23.

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Capitel 26.

Die Juden in Persien.

Rückkehr von Bombay nach Maskat zur See. — Gefahrvolle Seereise. — Maskat.

Ich schiffte mich im März 1850 auf einem arabischen Schiffe ein. Der Wind war stark, jedoch günstig. Siebenzig Passagiere aus verschiedenen Nationen befanden sich mit mir auf dem Schiffe und wir hatten alle Hoffnung einer guten Reise. — Wir kannten aber nicht die Unfähigkeit unseres Schiffscapitäns. In der dritten Nacht nach unserer Abreise war unser Steuermann eingeschlafen, wodurch das Schiff bedeutend aus seinem Curse gekommen war, wie wir leider erst am achten Tage bemerkten. Drei Tage verstrichen in schrecklicher Ungewißheit, da sandte ich meinen Dolmetscher und Diener zum Capitän, um ihm Vorstellungen über unsere Lage zu machen. Der Capitän empfing ihn mit Fluchen und Drohungen, wodurch unsere Furcht nur noch vergrößert wurde. Wir bemerkten in einiger Entfernung vom Schiffe etwas, was mir wie ein Vogelschwarm aussah, und hatten schon die Hoffnung gefaßt, daß wir nicht mehr fern vom Lande seien; als wir aber näher kamen, sahen wir, daß es fliegende Fische waren, ein sicheres Zeichen, daß wir weit vom festen Lande entfernt waren. Unsere ganze Hoffnung hatten wir auf den Steuermann gesetzt, der ein alter und erfahrener Matrose war, und wir baten ihn, alle seine Kräfte aufzubieten, um uns der drohenden Gefahr zu entziehen; darauf begaben wir uns gemeinschaftlich zum Capitän und ersuchten ihn, das Commando des Schiffes an den Steuermann abzutreten, welcher diese Seegegenden genau kenne. Er willigte ein. Unsere Wasser- und Speisevorräthe wurden in bedeutend verkleinerten Rationen ausgetheilt.

Dieser traurige Zustand währte bis zum 18. Tage, wo die Lebensmittel gänzlich zu fehlen anfingen. Wir läuterten in dieser

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Noth Seewasser, um den Durst zu stillen.[1] Am 19. Tage bestieg der Capitän selbst den Hauptmast und beobachtete mit seinem Fernrohre den Horizont. Nach anderthalbstündigem Herumspähen stieg er bleich und verstört wieder herunter. Am Abend begann er seine Forschungen von Neuem; er sah einen grauen Streifen im Ocean. War es Land, oder war es eine jener wunderbaren Trugerscheinungen, die den verirrten Seefahrern so gefährlich sind? — Ich ging ermüdet und erschöpft in die Cajüte hinab und ließ meinen Diener auf dem Verdeck, kaum aber war ich hinabgegangen, so kam eine gewaltige Welle und warf ihn um. Ich rief ihm zu: „Bist du betrunken?“ — Er antwortete: „Versuchen Sie es selbst einmal, und Sie werden sehen!“ — Ich begab mich sofort wieder auf das Verdeck, in demselben Augenblicke stürzte sich eine ungeheure schäumende Woge über dasselbe und warf mich zu Boden. Ich glaubte ich sei verloren, und war nicht wenig erstaunt, als ich nach einigen Minuten wieder zum Bewußtsein kam. Die Segel wurden zerrissen, der Mast abgebrochen, das Verdeck war mit Wasser überschüttet. Der Sturm wüthete fort und fort und das Schiff, einem verlorenen Menschen gleich, war jeder Welle preisgegeben. Wir hatten alle Hoffnung aufgegeben und sahen das Grab vor uns offen. In diesen Augenblicken fielen alle Passagiere ohne Unterschied des Glaubens auf die Knie und befahlen sich Gott, dessen furchtbare Größe mit mächtigem Hauche Welten und Meere bewegt. — Dieses Ereigniß fiel in die erste Osternacht.

Nachdem ich mein Gebet vollendet, war ich ruhiger geworden und stieg hinab, um mich aufs Lager zu werfen. Der Orkan wüthete bis Mitternacht, dann hörte er nach und nach auf. Am nächsten Morgen waren wir alle auf Deck versammelt, voll froher Gefühle über die überstandene Gefahr. Nun stellte sich jedoch der

[1] Dies geschieht, indem man ein Gefäß, Tanasa genannt, welches aus einer gewissen rothen Erdart gefertigt und dessen Oeffnung verstopft ist, ins Meer hinabsenkt. Das Gefäß nimmt eine Quantität Seewasser in sich auf, welches später, nachdem dasselbe wieder an Bord gezogen ist, herausstickert, indem die salzigen Theile des Wassers zurückbleiben. Man bekommt auf diese Art ein ziemlich trinkbares Wasser.

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Hunger in desto stärkerem Maße ein. Einer der Passagiere hatte zufällig erfahren, daß der Capitän einen kleinen Vorrath von Datteln bewahre, wir verlangten dieselben, doch wurden sie uns aus guten Gründen verweigert. Man sagte uns nämlich, sie seien für die Matrosen bestimmt, damit diese nicht aus Mangel an Nahrung die Kraft verlören. Da wir aber vom Hunger zu sehr gepeinigt wurden, so beharrten wir auf unserem Verlangen und drohten dem Capitän, ihn bei den europäischen Consuln zu verklagen, worauf er uns die Datteln auslieferte. Wir stillten zwar mit denselben unsern Hunger, empfanden aber nach dem Genuß den marterndsten Durst. — Der Capitän stieg wieder auf den Mast und hielt Ausschau. Er rief „Land!“ und unter Freude und Jubel verbreitete sich der Ruf. Wir segelten der Küste zu, von günstigem Winde getrieben umsteuerten wir einige Felsenriffe und am 22. Tage der Reise sahen wir die riesige Gebirgsmasse des Djebel Dahoudki vor uns liegen, dieselbe, welche wir am Abend vorher erblickt hatten, die jedoch der Capitän nicht erkannte. Vom Lande aus sahen wir einige Boote auf uns zurudern und mit gemischten Gefühlen der Freude und Furcht uns nahen. Eine kräftige Stimme rief uns zu: „Salem Alekem!“ (Friede mit euch!) und mit Entzücken wiederholten wir Alle diesen Gruß. Am 22. Tage nach unserer Abfahrt von Bombay warfen wir Anker und waren nur sechs Meilen von Maskat, dem Ziel unserer Reise entfernt.

Wir waren gerettet, aber aufs furchtbarste erschöpft. Ich sandte sofort meinen Diener mit meinen Pässen zum englischen Consul und um einige Lebensmittel anzukaufen. Eine Stunde später segelte ein Boot mit der englischen Flagge auf uns zu, in welchem sich die Beamten des Consuls befanden, die den Auftrag hatten, mich abzuholen. Verwundert über eine solche Aufnahme fuhr ich mit ihnen und hatte die Freude in dem Consul einen Glaubensgenossen zu finden. Er heißt Hasi Hesekiel, ist aus Bagdad und verwaltet seit 11 Jahren dieses Amt als Nachfolger seines Schwiegervaters Reuben. Dieser Mann ist der einzige Jude in Maskat, neben seiner schwarzen Dienerschaft, welche er zum Mosaismus bekehrt hat.

Die Stadt hat eine sehr schöne Synagoge, in welcher sich

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einige alte Pentateuche befinden. Im Hofe derselben befindet sich ein Frauenbad, welches früher zu den religiösen Reinigungen benutzt wurde. Vor mehren Jahrhunderten wurden die Juden in Maskat von der Pest heimgesucht, welche den größten Theil hinwegraffte, die Uebriggebliebenen wanderten aus. Ich habe auch den alten Begräbnißplatz der Gemeinde besucht, um welchen herum sich die Zelte der Araber erheben. Auch traf ich mehre Glaubensgenossen aus den benachbarten Städten in Maskat. Die Einwohner lieben die Juden, welche sie Walad-Sara (Kinder Sara) nennen.

Maskat gehörte früher den Portugiesen und war von ihnen befestigt. Später haben es die Abyssinier erobert. Jetzt regiert dort ein Imam, der von England unterstützt wird. Die Stadt ist der bedeutendste Handelsplatz Arabiens, namentlich ist der Perlenhandel, mit welchem sich vorzugsweise die Beduinen befassen, sehr großartig. Die Stadt selbst ist groß, aber unreinlich; sie liegt am Fuße großer Gebirge und ist rings von denselben umschlossen. Die Bevölkerung beläuft sich auf etwa 60,000 Seelen. Die Luft ist ungesund, was von den vielen todten Fischen herkommt, welche man in großen Massen in den Straßen liegen sieht. Nach den starken Regengüssen bilden sich in den Gebirgen reißende Ströme, welche verschiedenartige Trümmer bis ins Meer mit sich fortschwemmen.

Capitel 27.

Reise von Maskat nach Abeschur.

Jüdische Stämme in der Wüste Arabiens. — Bender Abassi. — Linsa. — Abeschur.

Nach einer Rast von 21 Tagen schiffte ich mich nach Abeschur ein, aber schon am dritten Tage der Fahrt mußten wir längs dem Strande von Ormuzd segeln. Ein heftiger Windstoß

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schleuderte unser Schiff an eine Felsenklippe, so daß es strandete. Das Wasser strömte in das Schiff, es entstand eine Scene entsetzlichster Angst und Verwirrung, Jeder versuchte sich zu retten und sprang in das einzige Boot, welches wir besaßen. Das kleine Fahrzeug, übermäßig beladen, sank. Viele retteten sich schwimmend an die Küste, Andere ertranken. Die Waaren und Lebensmittel wurden auf dem Schiffe zurückgelassen.

Aller Habe und Nahrungsmittel beraubt lagen wir auf dem Strande, vor uns einerseits den persischen Golf, andererseits die weite Wüste. Auf dem Platze, wo wir angelaufen waren, zwischen Mascat und Bender Abassi, erhob sich früher eine Stadt, von welcher man jetzt nur noch Ruinen sieht. Wir fanden in den Gräben zwischen den Felsbergen Regenwasser genug, um den Durst zu löschen, aber der Hunger plagte uns sehr. Während man das beschädigte Schiff ausbesserte, durchstreiften wir die Umgegend und suchten nach Nahrungsmitteln, fanden indeß nichts als einige Kräuter und Schwämme, mit denen wir uns 3 Tage ernährten. Indessen war unser Schiff wieder flott geworden und unter dem Schutze der Vorsehung erreichten wir ohne weitere Zufälle nach drei Tagen Bender Abassi, wo wir einige Tage verweilten, um unser Schiff gehörig wieder in Stand zu setzen.

Von Bender an erstreckt sich eine weite fruchtbare Gegend bis nach Persien. An der gegenüberliegenden Seite des persischen Golfs, im Innern Arabiens, dehnt sich die Wüste bis nach Aden, Medina und Mekka. Die Pilgrime, welche die Prophetenstadt besucht haben, berichten, daß sie auf dem Wege 16 Stämme angetroffen haben, von denen vier den Namen Jhoud Cheibar (ein abschreckender Name bei den Arabern) führen und sich zum mosaischen Glauben bekennen. Ich habe diese Thatsache nicht allein von mahomedanischen Pilgern, sondern auch von meinen Glaubensbrüdern in Bagdad gehört. Diese Stämme sollen unter den Nomaden einen eigenen Bundesstaat bilden und wie diese die Karawanen plündern.[1]

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[1] Der berühmte Reisende Dr. H. Petermann in Berlin theilte mir persönlich mit, daß er auf seinen Reisen von einem Arzte ebenfalls über diese Stämme Berichte erhalten habe, aus denen hervorgehe, daß dieselben wirk-

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Nicht weit von Bender Abaſſi liegt die Inſel Rein, berühmt durch ihre Perlenfiſchereien. Etwas weiter entfernt liegt die Stadt Linſa. Sie wird von einem faſt unabhängigen Scheik regiert, welcher Münzen prägen läßt, die in ſeinem kleinen von Arabern bewohnten Gebiete Geltung haben. Bei Linſa halten die Schiffe an, um Proviant einzunehmen, im Uebrigen iſt die Stadt ohne Bedeutung.

Drei Tagereiſen von Linſa beginnt die perſiſche Grenze, die durch arabiſche Feldlager bezeichnet iſt. Dort ſtrandete in einem Unwetter unſer Schiff. Der Capitän, welcher vor Plünderung Furcht hatte, ſuchte den Befehlshaber der Grenzwachen auf, bot ihm Geſchenke und erhielt dadurch für Reiſende und Gepäck Sicherheit. Man verkaufte uns nachher Eier und Gemüſe.

Nachdem unſer Fahrzeug wieder flott geworden, ſetzten wir unſere Reiſe fort und landeten nach zwei Tagen in Abeſchur. Es wohnen dort etwa 70 jüdiſche Familien, die weniger bedrückt ſind, wie die im Innern von Perſien wohnenden. Sie verdanken dies dem engliſchen Conſul, von welchem auch ich in Folge eines Empfehlungsſchreibens mit Wohlwollen empfangen wurde. Er gab mir eine Empfehlung an ſeinen Viceconſul in Schiraz, unterhandelte ſelbſt mit dem Karawan-Baſchi meine Reiſe und ließ dieſen ſich ſchriftlich für meine Sicherheit verbürgen.

Abeſchur liegt auf einer Landſpitze im perſiſchen Golf und iſt mit einer halb verfallenen Mauer umgeben. Die Stadt treibt bedeutenden Handel, auch legen hier zweimal im Jahre die Dampfboote von Bombay an, um Frachten für das Innere von Perſien zu beſorgen.

lich Juden ſeien, obgleich ſie keinen Talmud beſitzen, und ſprach dabei den Wunſch aus, daß dieſe Stämme aufgeſucht werden möchten. Der Wohnſitz dieſer Stämme iſt zwölf Tagereiſen von Dſcheddah, auf dem Wege nach Mokka. Nach der Angabe jenes Arztes hatten ſie an dem Orte, wo er ſie beſuchte, 40,000 Zelte; in ihrer Nähe wohnen die Jam, ein Araberſtamm. — Benjamin de Tudela S. 71, 72 ſpricht von dieſen Stämmen und rechnet ſie ihrer Herkunft nach zu den Stämmen Ruben, Gad und Halbmanaſſe. — Ritter's Erdkunde Thl. 13, S. 403—407 ſpricht nach verſchiedenen Quellen über dieſe Stämme. Wir hoffen auf unſerer zweiten Reiſe dieſelben zu beſuchen, um endlich eine ſichere Auskunft über ſie feſtſtellen zu können.

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Capitel 28.

Reise nach Schiraz durch die Wüste.

Ich hatte zur Reise europäische Kleider angelegt, während mein Diener die Kleidung der Einwohner von Kelbella trug. Meine Sicherheit lag in den Händen politischer Obrigkeiten und mit Vertrauen auf Gott trat ich die Reise an. Unser Weg führte durch von Räuberhorden bewohnte Gegenden, doch beschützte uns die Vorsehung, obgleich der Sieg nicht immer ohne Opfer erkauft wurde.

Ich selbst war mehrmals während der Reise persönlicher Gefahr ausgesetzt, aus welcher ich nur durch den Karawan-Baschi, der sich für meine Sicherheit verbürgt hatte, gerettet wurde. — Bei Tagesanbruch zog ich mich jeden Morgen zurück, um, ehe die Karawane weiter zog, mein Gebet zu verrichten. Dies wurde bemerkt, und als ich eines Tages im Begriff war, meine Tephilim anzulegen, hörte ich mit Schrecken die Worte: „Ein Jude ist unter uns!“ — Ich wandte mich um, ein Perser legte das Gewehr auf mich an, der Schuß fiel, aber die Kugel pfiff an mir vorbei. Der Karawan-Baschi, der mit vielen Anderen herbeigelaufen kam, entriß dem Thäter die Waffe. Dieser rief wüthend aus: „Ein Jude wagt es, unsere Gesellschaft zu verunreinigen!“ — „Wie weißt Du aber, daß er ein Jude ist?“ fragte der Karawan-Baschi. — „Ich habe ihn beten und seine Riemen anlegen sehen!“ — Der Karawan-Baschi erblaßte, anwortete jedoch sofort: Wahrscheinlich irrst Du Dich; mag es aber auch sein, wie es wolle, Jude oder Muselmann, ich stehe mit meinem Kopfe für ihn ein und muß ihn unversehrt in das Haus des Viceconsuls von Schiraz abliefern.“ — Der Autorität des Befehlshabers wagte Niemand zu widersprechen, man ist zu sehr an Gehorsam gewöhnt. Die Gesellschaft beruhigte sich und der Vorfall gerieth bald in Vergessenheit.

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Zwei Tage später passirten wir mehre Engpässe, über welche gewaltige Felsenstücke herabhingen. Es war bereits Nacht geworden, als zwei Schüsse fielen; wir sahen uns von vorn und im Rücken angegriffen, und die Ausgänge des Passes waren von Räubern besetzt. Es entspann sich ein hitziges Gefecht, an welchem eine allgemeine Theilnahme durch die Lage des Weges verhindert wurde, und man kämpfte bis Tagesanbruch. Da erkannte man, daß ein theilweiser Irrthum stattgefunden hatte; denn an der Spitze der Karawane sah man Freunde, im Rücken aber dauerte der Kampf fort. Unterstützt von unseren neuen Verbündeten gelang es uns bald, die Räuber in die Flucht zu schlagen. Wir erklommen darauf auf freiem Wege eine Felswand.

Am zweiten Tage nachher kamen wir in ein herrliches Gefilde mit Wohnungen und prächtigen Pflanzungen, das uns wie eine Oase erquickte. Von meinem Diener begleitet hatte ich mich von der Karawane entfernt, ohne zu bemerken, daß uns zwei Perser folgten. Der Tag verlief, ich gewahrte die Karawane nicht mehr und wandte mich zu einem in der Nähe liegenden Dorfe. Da bemerkte ich erst die beiden uns nachfolgenden Perser, deren Aeußeres nichts Gutes andeutete. Ich hatte vorgegeben, ich könne nicht persisch reden, während mein Diener der Sprache vollkommen mächtig war; so hörten wir denn, wie sich unsere beiden Verfolger laut verabredeten, sie wollten uns nun, begünstigt durch die Dunkelheit, tödten und sich unserer Sachen bemächtigen. Um einem neuen Unfall zu begegnen, kam ich auf den Gedanken, die beiden Menschen durch eine Flasche Branntwein, das Lieblingsgetränk vieler Perser, zu beschwichtigen. Ich nahm eine Flasche von meinem Packpferde und ließ sie ihnen durch meinen Diener anbieten, der sie dabei mit gebrochenen persischen Worten fragte: „Wollt Ihr von diesem Rakiuh (Branntwein) trinken?“ Einer der Räuber antwortete persisch: „Warum nicht, wir wollen trinken, um Muth zur Ausführung unseres Streiches zu bekommen.“ Sie nahmen darauf die Flasche, leerten sie und ließen uns eine Zeitlang in Ruhe. Plötzlich hörte ich das Geläut des Leitpferdes unserer Karawane. Es war die höchste Zeit zu unserer Rettung. Wir riefen so laut wir konnten um Hülfe und die beiden Banditen flohen mit verhängten Zügeln.

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Am Morgen nach diesem Abenteuer langten wir in Schiraz an, wo ich mich sofort zum englischen Viceconsul, einem gebornen Perser führen ließ, der mich in Folge der Empfehlung seines Vorgesetzten in Abeschur sehr freundlich aufnahm.

Capitel 29.

Schiraz. — Beklagenswerthe Lage der Juden.

Noch vor etwa 20 Jahren wohnten in dieser einst prachtvollen und blühenden Stadt fast 3000 Juden.[1] Durch Bedrückungen, Verfolgungen und Gehässigkeiten aller Art wurden über 25,000 derselben gezwungen, zu der muselmännischen Secte Ali's überzutreten. Eine große Anzahl dieser Familien bewahren jedoch noch immer den Glauben ihrer Väter im Herzen, wenn sie auch äußerlich abgefallen sind, und finden sogar Mittel ihre Kinder heimlich beschneiden zu lassen. Neun Synagogen, welche sich in der Stadt befinden, zeugen von der ehemaligen Größe der jüdischen Gemeinde; jetzt sind sie leider fast alle verödet. Das Hebräische sprechen die Juden von Schiraz fast so wie die Askenasim (deutsche Juden).

Bei meiner Ankunft fand ich die Stadt in Aufruhr und Gährung, eine Folge des Regierungswechsels in Teheran. Man schlug sich heftig in den Straßen und erst gegen Abend legte sich der Tumult. Der Viceconsul, der mich bei sich aufgenommen hatte, ließ mich unter sicherem Geleite zu dem Nassi Mulah Israel führen. Dieser, ein ehrwürdiger Greis, nahm mich mit dem lebhaftesten Wohlwollen auf und nach morgenländischer Sitte wurde mir, im Hause seines Sohnes Isaak, ein gastfreundliches Obdach gewährt.

[1] Benjamin de Tudela S. 82 spricht von 10,000 Juden.

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Meine Anwesenheit war sofort unter den Glaubensgenossen bekannt geworden und die Angesehensten statteten mir bald einen Besuch ab. Vom Morgen bis zum Abend wurde ich in Anspruch genommen, mein Rath und Beistand in verschiedenen Dingen erbeten, und meine Aussprüche wie Orakel betrachtet. Eines Tages füllte sich mein Zimmer nach und nach mit einer Anzahl weiß verschleierter Frauen, welche sich mir der Reihe nach vorstellten. Da die jüdischen Frauen dort nur schwarze Schleier tragen dürfen, um sie von andern zu unterscheiden, so beunruhigte mich dieser Besuch, denn ich befürchtete, daß das Haus von Insurgenten überfallen werden möchte. Man beruhigte mich indeß, indem man mir mittheilte, daß diese Frauen den Familien angehörten, welche gezwungen den Islam bekannten, im Geheimen aber dem Glauben ihrer Väter anhingen. Die Besucherinnen lüfteten den Schleier und küßten mir Stirn und Hand. Ich richtete einige Worte über ihren Abfall vom Glauben an sie, worauf die Frauen heftig weinten. Einer der anwesenden Männer aber trat hervor und sprach: „Unsere Brüder wissen, durch welche schreckliche Umstände wir gezwungen wurden, wir mußten uns vor der Tyrannei und dem Tode retten. Wir bekennen aber, daß wir trotz unserer scheinbaren Abtrünnigkeit mit ganzem Herzen an dem Glauben unserer Väter hangen und bekunden dies durch unseren Besuch bei Dir; würde dieser Besuch verrathen, wir wären sicher verloren." — Diese Worte rührten mich tief, ich tröstete sie und sprach: „Habet Geduld, meine Brüder, und harret aus in der Zuversicht auf Gott. Vielleicht werden Europas Monarchen, unter deren Schutze unsere Brüder glücklich leben, durch ihre Vermittelung auch Euer Unglück lindern und edle Herrscher auf Persiens Thron setzen, welche Eure Ketten lösen und Euch gestatten, frei und öffentlich Euren Glauben zu bekennen."

An einem andern Tage kam der Führer der Rebellen zum Nassi, um ihn zu einer neuen Steuer zu zwingen. Als er mich dort gewahrte, fragte er, wer ich sei, worauf der Nassi erklärte: „Es ist ein Chacham aus Beth-el-Mikdaß (Jerusalem)." Kaum hatte der Perser das gehört, als er mich mit folgenden Worten anredete: „Man hat mir gesagt, daß die Chachamim jener Stadt sehr gelehrt seien, und namentlich die Kunst verständen, Amulette

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zu machen; mache Du mir eins, um mich im Kampfe zu schützen.“ — Ich wollte anfangs auf diese Ehre verzichten, doch zerstreuten sich meine Bedenken bei dem Anblick seines blutigen Yatagans (Streitmesser) bald und ich versprach ihm, am folgenden Tage seinen Wunsch zu befriedigen. Ich machte mich ans Werk; da ich jedoch die heiligen Gebräuche nicht zum Aberglauben profaniren wollte, so blätterte ich unschlüssig in der Bibel und stieß auf die Geschichte Esther's. Ich nahm die Namen der zehn Söhne Haman's, verband sie durch Buchstaben zu Sätzen und schrieb sie dann in der Form cabbalistischer Amulette auf ein viereckiges Pergamentblatt. Dies übergab ich dem Perser, der große Freude darüber bezeugte, und sagte ihm dabei, das Amulett werde nur helfen, wenn er stets muthig und tapfer sei. Zwei Tage später nahm der Perser an einem Kampfe der Insurgenten gegen die Truppen Antheil, wobei letztere geschlagen wurden; er glaubte nun fest an die Kraft meines Amulettes, brachte mir Geschenke, und proclamirte, ich sei ein Mann Gottes, da mein Amulett so wirksam sei. Dieser kleine Vorfall erwarb mir ein nicht unbedeutendes Ansehen.

Einige Tage später hatte sich das Gerücht verbreitet, die Rebellen wollten die Juden überfallen und diese kamen um Schutz und Hülfe bittend zu mir. Ich sagte, daß ich als armer Pilger ihnen doch nicht helfen könne; sie aber sprachen: „Du bist ein gelehrter Mann und Gott ist mit Dir, Du kannst uns retten.“ So gedrängt, gab ich ihnen den Rath, sie möchten sich Alle in einem geräumigen Hause versammeln und ein festliches Mahl halten; sich jedoch wohl bewaffnen, alle Zugänge verrammeln und im Vertrauen auf Gottes Beistand die kommenden Dinge erwarten. Glücklicherweise blieb das Gerücht ohne Folgen.

Einige Monate vor meiner Ankunft hatte sich der Nassi Mulah Eliahu den Groll des Imam zugezogen und war ins Gefängniß geworfen worden. Der Imam forderte ein so ungeheures Lösegeld für seine Befreiung, daß die Gemeinde es nicht bezahlen konnte. Man schlug ihm darauf vor, zum Islam überzutreten, wodurch er frei werde. Der Gefangene erklärte sich dazu bereit, und wurde vor den Kaid (Oberhaupt) geführt. Da jedoch vor dem Uebertritt zahlreiche Vorbereitungen erforderlich sind, so

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ſuchte der Naſſi Zeit zu gewinnen, indem er dieſelben verzögerte. Der Imam erkundigte ſich nach dem Grunde dieſer Verzögerung, worauf der Naſſi erklärte, er nehme ſein Wort zurück, da er in ſeinem Alter es nicht über ſich gewinnen könne, den Glauben abzuſchwören, den er ſein ganzes Leben hindurch bekannt habe. Ohne weiteres ließ ihm der Imam 500 Filagos (Streiche) auf die Fußſohlen geben und ihn dann in einen feuchten Kerker werfen. Vier Tage nacheinander wurde dies wiederholt, ſo daß der Unglückliche 2000 Streiche auf die Fußſohlen bekam. Ohne Bewegung, mit dem Geſichte zur Erde gewandt und einer Leiche ähnlich, lag er im Kerker. Brod und Waſſer waren ſeine Nahrung, und ſicher wäre das Opfer unter den Qualen und Martern geſtorben, wenn ihn nicht die Vorſehung gerettet hätte. Es brach nämlich während der Zeit eine Empörung aus, bei welcher Gelegenheit die Rebellen alle Gefangenen, und unter dieſen auch den Naſſi befreiten. Er zog darauf nach Bagdad, wo ich ihn ſpäter kennen lernte. Sein Vermögen hatte indeß der Imam an ſich geriſſen.

Eine andere Thatſache, die ein Bild von der troſtloſen Lage der dortigen Juden giebt, iſt folgende. Einem reichen Perſer gefiel ein jüdiſches Mädchen und er ſuchte ſie bei ihren Eltern auf. Da aber dieſe Beſuche gefährlich wurden, ſo drang er in das Mädchen, ſich zum muſelmänniſchen Glauben zu bekehren, damit er ſie zum Weibe nehmen könne. „Meine Eltern würden vor Gram ſterben," antwortete die Jüdin, „wenn ich meinen Glauben verlaſſe." — „Ihr hört es," ſprach der Perſer zu ſeinen Begleitern, „ſie will den Islam annehmen." — Trotz aller Proteſtationen eilte er zum Achund (Prieſter und Juſtizobrigkeit) und erzählte ihm unter Beſtätigung ſeiner Begleiter, das Mädchen wolle zum Islam übergehen. Sofort ließ dieſer bei den Eltern die Tochter, welche man während der Zeit verſteckt hatte, aufſuchen; die Boten prügelten grauſam auf die Eltern los, und die Tochter wurde vor den Achund geſchleppt. Nach zwei Tagen hatte man die geſetzlichen Reinigungen mit ihr beendet, worauf ſie bat, ſich auf der Terraſſe ergehen zu dürfen, um die Abendluft zu genießen. Als dies geſtattet wurde, ſtürzte ſie ſich von der Terraſſe herunter und zerſchmetterte den Kopf. Die Perſer, welche den Grund dieſes

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Selbstmordes kannten, verübten an dem Leichnam abscheuliche Gräuel, zerhackten ihn und ließen die Stücke auf der Straße liegen. Während der Nacht wagten es die Juden, die Ueberreste zu sammeln und zu beerdigen.

Die Stadt Schiraz hatte früher sehr schöne Anlagen und Bauwerke: Mausoleen, Collegien, Bazare, Karawanserein, prachtvolle Bäder u. s. w. Ein Erdbeben hat sie indeß fast gänzlich zerstört. Die Umgegend ist sehr fruchtbar, sie erzeugt köstliche Weine. Auch der Tombaco, eine Pflanze, welche als Taback in den besonders dazu gefertigten Wasserpfeifen (Nargile) geraucht wird, wächst dort in vorzüglicher Güte und besser als in Ispahan.

Capitel 30.

Ispahan.

Reiseunfälle. — Ankunft in Ispahan. — Der Minister Ismael.

Mein Aufenthalt in Schiraz währte einundzwanzig Tage, dann setzte ich meine Reise nach Ispahan fort. — Der Viceconsul sorgte dafür, daß ich mich einer Karawane von mehr als 2000 Mann, die ebenfalls nach Ispahan zog, anschließen und so unter möglichst sicherm Schutze die mit großen Gefahren und Mühseligkeiten verbundene Reise durch eine Landstrecke von 22 Tagereisen zurücklegen konnte.[1] Auf seinen Rath auch gab ich mir den Charakter eines Arztes und legte europäische Kleidung an.

Schon am dritten Tage nach der Abreise wurden wir von einer der zahlreichen Räuberbanden angefallen, die wir jedoch ohne eigene erhebliche Nachtheile mit Erbeutung mehrerer Pferde zurückwiesen. — Bald fand sich auch die Gelegenheit, mich in

[1] Benjamin de Tudela S. 82. giebt die Entfernung von Schiraz nach Ispahan auf 4 Tagereisen an. Ich weiß nicht, welchen Weg er gegangen ist; denn wenn die Karawanen schnell reisen, so gebrauchen sie wenigstens 15 bis 18 Tage.

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meinem neuen Berufe als Arzt zu erproben. Es erkrankten nämlich während der nächsten Tage drei der bedeutendsten Kaufleute unserer Karawane. Mit Zuversicht auf den Beistand Gottes und die Mittel meiner Reiseapotheke unternahm ich es, den Kranken Hülfe zu leisten, und es gelang mir, ihnen die Gesundheit wiederzugeben. Ich hatte mir dadurch drei Freunde erworben, deren Dankbarkeit mich in einer drohenden Gefahr schützte und rettete.

Um mich vor den brennenden Sonnenstrahlen zu schützen, hatte ich von Bombay einen Sonnenschirm von ausgezeichneter Arbeit mitgenommen. Dieser Sonnenschirm war die Veranlassung, daß ich zweimal in Lebensgefahr gerieth. Eines Tages von der glühenden Sonne geplagt, machte ich Gebrauch von meinem Schirm; auf einmal fiel ein Schuß und eine Kugel streifte meinen Mantel. Ich wußte nicht, daß in Persien einem Fremden das Tragen eines Sonnenschirms versagt ist. Ein Perser war es, der auf mich geschossen. Die ganze Karawane gerieth durch diesen Vorfall in Aufruhr und der Karawan-Baschi hatte Mühe, mich diesen Ungelegenheiten zu entziehen.

Ein anderer Perser, dem mein Sonnenschirm gefallen haben mochte, bat mich, ihm denselben zu verkaufen, und als ich dies ausschlug, schwur er in seinem Groll, mir nicht allein meinen Schirm, sondern auch das Leben zu nehmen. Er verabredete mit seinen Gefährten den Plan, mich während der Nacht zu ermorden. Die Vorsehung jedoch und meine drei dankbaren Patienten und Freunde retteten mich; sie hatten nämlich den ganzen Anschlag erfahren und wachten sorgfältig über mich. Eines Abends bat mich der Eine von ihnen, mein Zelt neben dem seinigen aufzuschlagen, und da ich das Vorhaben der Perser ahnte, willfahrte ich gern diesem Wunsche. Tief in der Nacht schlich sich ein Mann mit einem Dolche bewaffnet an mich heran, wurde jedoch plötzlich von meinem Freunde ergriffen. Der Elende bat um Gnade und versprach von seinem Vorhaben gegen mich abzulassen, suchte jedoch noch in derselben Nacht mehrmals an mich heran zu kommen, woran er indeß durch meine drei wachsamen Freunde verhindert wurde.

So wurde ich für meinen ärztlichen Beistand reichlich belohnt und gedachte dankbar des Viceconsuls von Schiraz, dessen

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Rathe ich die Freundschaft meiner wackern Beschützer zu danken hatte, und aus dem für mich noch manche andere Vortheile erwuchsen, so namentlich der, daß sich auf dem ganzen Zuge die verschiedenen Stämme beeilten, mich mit Lebensmitteln zu versorgen. — Die fortdauernde Achtsamkeit meiner Freunde schützte mich fernerhin vor allen Verfolgungen.

Vier Tage lang durchzogen wir eine Gegend, gefüllt mit Ruinen ganzer Städte: traurige Zeichen der verheerenden Gottesgeißel, der Pest, und der Verfolgungssucht. Bis auf zwei Tagereisen hatten wir uns dem Ziele unserer langen Fahrt bereits genähert, als wir durch eine Räuberhorde von 2000 Mann angefallen wurden; da wir jedoch in der Nähe einer Karawanserei waren, konnten wir uns retten und zur Wehre setzen. Anderthalb Tage befanden wir uns schon im hartnäckigen Gefechte und unsere Noth war aufs höchste gestiegen, als wir es versuchten, durch Boten, welche wir nach Ispahan sandten, Hülfe zu erlangen. Unsere Boten waren glücklich durchgekommen; am dritten Tage kamen Landestruppen zu unserer Rettung herbei, mit deren Beistand wir die Banditen unter Zurücklassung vieler Verwundeten in die Flucht schlugen. — Drei Stunden von Ispahan wurden wir jedoch noch einmal angegriffen, da man aber das Gewehrfeuer in der Stadt hörte, eilte man uns zu Hülfe, und damit hatten wir die letzte Gefahr unserer Reise überwunden.

Am Morgen zogen wir in Ispahan ein. Ich stattete sogleich nach unserer Ankunft dem englischen Consul, von dem ich gütig empfangen wurde, meinen Besuch ab, und besuchte dann auch meine Glaubensgenossen, die sich alle darüber wunderten, daß ich glücklich die Gefahren einer Reise durch unwirthbare Strecken überstanden, Gegenden, welche zahlreiche und wohlbewaffnete Karawanen kaum zu betreten wagten, namentlich bei den durch den Regierungswechsel entstandenen politischen Unruhen.

Ispahan ist die größte Stadt des persischen Reiches; die überaus schöne Gegend, in der sie liegt, die reiche und üppige Vegetation, deren Fülle und Schönheit kaum eine Feder zu beschreiben vermag, bieten dem Reisenden Stoff genug zur Anschauung und Bewunderung, und riefen in mir die Erinnerung an die herrlichsten Gegenden des Morgenlandes wach.

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Es wohnen in der Stadt etwa 400 jüdiſche Familien; ſie beſitzen drei Synagogen und acht Mulahs (Chachamim).[1]

Bei meiner Anweſenheit in Iſpahan hatte ich das Glück, dort den Miniſter Iſmael zu treffen, der ein geborner Jude mit Namen Jekutiel, durch die Fügungen der Vorſehung zu jener hohen Stellung emporgehoben war; ich hatte die Ehre mit ſeinen Brüdern Joſeph und Mardochai, und ſeinem Vater Aga Babi mehre Male zum Beſuche von ihm angenommen zu werden. — Dieſer hochgeſtellte und edle Mann verdient es, daß ich den Leſer mit einer kurzen Biographie deſſelben bekannt mache, die ich nach den Mittheilungen der Seinigen hier wiedergebe und für deren Richtigkeit ich bürgen kann.

Vor ungefähr dreißig Jahren wohnte ein armer jüdiſcher Juwelier Namens Aga Babi in Iſpahan. Er hatte drei Söhne, von denen ſich der eine, Jekutiel, durch ſeine Kunſt als Tänzer auszeichnete. Er ergötzte dadurch die Großen der Stadt ſo ſehr, daß man über den Künſtler den Juden vergaß. Bei einem dem Schah zu Ehren in der Stadt veranſtalteten großen Feſte war auch Jekutiel als Tänzer zugegen; durch die Anweſenheit des Herrſchers zu den außerordentlichſten Productionen ſeiner Kunſt angefeuert, hatte der Jüngling die Kühnheit, bei einem verwegnen Sprunge die Hand des Monarchen zu küſſen, und wurde von demſelben, der das Talent des jungen Mannes bewunderte und ſeine Kühnheit günſtig aufnahm, bewogen, ihm an ſeinen Hof zu folgen, obgleich der Vater Jekutiels ſich alle Mühe gab, ihn durch Vorſtellungen und Bitten zurückzuhalten.

Der Jüngling wuchs unter den Augen ſeines Gönners, des Monarchen, heran und bewies durch ſeine Anhänglichkeit, ſeine Treue und ſeinen Eifer, daß er der ihm zu Theil gewordenen Gnade würdig ſei. Doch vergaß er auch am Hofe, von Verführung und Schmeichelei umgeben, niemals ſeine Eltern und ſeine niedrige Herkunft, und blieb lange dem Glauben ſeiner Väter treu. Sein Jugendgefährte, der Sohn des Schah, deſſen Vergnügungen er theilte, nöthigte ihn eines Tages beim Gaſtmahl zum Genuß des verbotenen Fleiſches. Von dieſer Zeit an leiſtete der Günſt-

[1] Benjamin de Tudela, S. 82, ſpricht von 15,000 Juden.

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ling den Bitten des Prinzen nur wenig Widerstand und trat bald zum Islam über.

Einige Zeit nachher brach in Mesched eine Empörung aus, zu deren Dämpfung der Schah selbst mit einem Heere auszog. In seiner Begleitung war auch sein junger Freund und Diener Jekutiel, der nach seinem Uebertritt zum Islam den Namen Ismael angenommen hatte. Die Stadt Mesched wurde belagert, doch vertheidigten sich die Aufrührer hartnäckig und schlugen bei einem Ausfalle das Heer der Belagerer in die Flucht. Bei dieser allgemeinen Flucht war auch der Schah selbst von seinen Truppen verlassen, vereinzelt und ohne alle Bedeckung; nur sein treuer Ismael hatte ihn nicht verlassen, und beide verdankten der Schnelligkeit der Rosse ihre Rettung. Als der Schah sich einmal umblickte, bemerkte er den treuen Diener, der ihm folgte, und rief ihm zu: „Rette Dich, so gut Du vermagst und überlaß mich meinem Schicksale.“ — Ismael aber antwortete: „Ich verlasse Dich nicht, o Herr, ich will mich mit Dir retten oder untergehen.“ — So gelangten die beiden Flüchtlinge in einen Wald, wo sie sechs Tage umherirrten. Der Schah glaubte, sie müßten vor Hunger umkommen, Ismael aber theilte mit ihm einen Ueberrest von Zwieback und Getränk. Als diese geringen Vorräthe verzehrt waren, schwang sich der edle Jüngling auf sein Roß und ritt davon, um Lebensmittel zu suchen. Er traf auf der Straße, welche er eingeschlagen hatte, nach langem Suchen einen Perser, und erhielt von diesem Brod, mit welchem er sofort zurücksprengte. Als er jedoch wieder zu dem Orte kam, wo er den Schah verlassen hatte, war dieser verschwunden. Verzweifelnd flehte er zu Gott und durchsprengte rufend den Wald nach allen Richtungen, bis er endlich seinen Gebieter fand und mit dem Brode den fast Verhungerten erquickte. Am siebten Tage endlich wurden die beiden Flüchtigen durch eine Schaar Reiter aufgefunden, welche man zur Rettung des Schah ausgesandt hatte.

In Folge dieser Treue und Ergebenheit erhob der Schah, sobald er nach Teheran zurückgekommen war, seinen Günstling Ismael zum ersten Minister des Reiches. Diese hohe Stellung verwaltete er mit größtem Eifer bis zum Tode des Schah. Ohne stolz zu werden, erinnerte er sich mit Liebe der Seinigen und

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wurde ein unermüdlicher Beschützer seiner früheren Glaubensbrüder. Als der Schah seinem Ende nahe war, ließ er seinen Sohn zu sich entbieten und empfahl ihm auf dem Sterbebette den Minister Ismael als seinen Freund, treuesten Diener und rechtlichen Rathgeber; er bat den Erben seiner Krone, diesen edlen Diener als solchen zu achten und in seiner Würde zu belassen. Nach dem Tode des Schah versuchten Neid und Mißgunst, den Minister bei dem jungen Gebieter zu verdächtigen und ihn in Ungnade zu stürzen. Ein besonderer Vorfall erhielt ihn jedoch in seiner mächtigen Stellung. Die Stadt Ispahan empörte sich nämlich während des Thronwechsels und der junge Schah beschloß, sie mit einer Contribution von 100,000 Tumanen zu bestrafen. Zur Beitreibung dieser Summe erwählte er den Minister Ismael, und versprach, ihn dafür in seinem Amte zu erhalten. In der Stadt hatte ein Achund einen neuen Aufruhr gegen den Botschafter des Schah veranstaltet, doch Ismael unterdrückte mit einer zahlreichen Armee den Aufstand, zerstörte einen Theil der Stadt, züchtigte die Rebellen und führte seinen schwierigen Auftrag glücklich aus. Doch hatte er bei diesen Ereignissen den Tod seines Vaters und auch des einen seiner Brüder zu beweinen. Der Urheber des Aufstandes war der Strafe durch die Flucht entkommen.

Diese Vorfälle fanden gegen Ende 1850 statt, kurz nachdem ich Ispahan verlassen hatte und während ich mich in Teheran befand.

Ismael lebt noch jetzt am Hofe zu Teheran, seine hohe Stellung bekleidet er indeß nicht mehr. In der allgemeinen Achtung und Ehrerbietung, die ihm gezollt wird, findet er den Trost für seinen Fall. Trotzdem bemüht er sich noch immer, die Leiden seiner alten Glaubensgenossen, so viel er kann, zu vermindern. Ich hatte, wie bereits oben mitgetheilt, die Ehre, diesen würdigen Mann persönlich kennen zu lernen, und verdankte seiner Güte Empfehlungen an einflußreiche Männer in Teheran, namentlich an die Mulah Ababi und Jacob, Besitzer eines bedeutenden Juwelengeschäfts.

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Capitel 31.

Meſched. — Kaſchan. — Yezd.

Eine öde und unfruchtbare Landſtrecke von achtzehn Tagereiſen liegt zwiſchen Ispahan und Meſched. Hier befinden ſich alterthümliche Ruinen eines Grabes, welches, wie die Bewohner der Stadt behaupten, das des Abraham ben Eſra ſein ſoll, zu welchem früher die Juden wallfahrteten. Es iſt bekannt, daß dieſer große in vielen Wiſſenſchaften erfahrene Gelehrte den Orient durchreiſt hat. Ich glaube indeß, daß die Tradition über das erwähnte Grab falſch iſt, doch mag es vielleicht das Grab eines ſeiner Verwandten ſein, der denſelben Namen führte.

Eine bedeutende Zahl flüchtiger Juden begegnete mir und theilte mir Folgendes über die Urſache ihrer Flucht mit. Vor dem Tode des letzten Schah (gegen 1840—1842) fielen die Muſelmänner in Meſched plötzlich über die dortigen Juden her, welche beinahe 400 Familien zählten,[1] und verlangten, ſie ſollten ſich

[1] Ritter's Erdkunde 3. Bd., 8. Th., S. 103. Die Juden, an 100 Familien zu Meſched, bemerkt A. Conolly, ſtehen beſonders in Verachtung. Sie ſind eben nicht reich, aber doch wohlhabend, im Vergleich mit ihren Glaubensbrüdern in Teheran und Ispahan, die nur den elendeſten Schacher treiben dürfen, gleich ſo vielen in Europa. In Meſched dürfen die Juden die heiligen Orte nicht betreten, die Moslemen-Bäder nicht beſuchen, ſie müſſen andere Kappen als die Gläubigen und einen Lappen als Abzeichen auf der Bruſt tragen. Sie dürfen ſich durch keinen Schlag gegen einen Moslemen wehren und werden von der Jugend des Ortes im Angeſicht ihrer Eltern mit Dreck und Steinen verfolgt, die es für verdienſtlich halten, die Seele eines Kafern in Schrecken zu bringen. In ihrer Synagoge wird ein Theil der Homilie perſiſch abgeſungen, ihr altes Teſtament hebräiſch abgeleſen. Beim Gebet hüllen ſie ihr Haupt in weiße Mäntel und richten es gegen Jeruſalem hin, während der Prieſter die Rolle des Pentateuchs emporhält. In ihrer Bibliothek zeigten ſie an 50 Copien ihrer heiligen Schrift, auf Pergamentrollen von Devoten geſchrieben, mit den Namensunterſchriften, jede in ihrem eigenen Verſchluß.

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zum Islam bekehren. Die Juden weigerten sich, worauf die Perser viele von ihnen ermordeten. Andere retteten sich durch die Flucht und entkamen glücklich nach Bagdad, während die Verfolger eine Zahl von ihnen wieder einholten und zum Uebertritt zwangen. Wie an allen anderen Orten hingen diese gewaltsam Bekehrten trotz des äußern Abfalls heimlich immer noch am Mosaismus. Sie verabredeten sich, zwar die Moscheen zu besuchen, sich aber des nicht koschern Fleisches zu enthalten. Jeden Freitag ging der Schochet von Haus zu Haus bei den Neubekehrten und verrichtete sein Amt. Diese gänzliche Absonderung gab Veranlassung zu Verdächtigungen. Der Achund fragte sie, ob sie gute Bekenner des Islam seien. Die Juden antworteten: „Mit Leib und Seele!“ — „Warum genießt ihr denn kein Fleisch?“ forschte der Achund weiter. — „Wir wollen durch Enthaltsamkeit unsere frühere Sünde abbüßen,“ war die Antwort. — Einstweilen begnügte man sich damit, beobachtete indeß die Verdächtigen und betraf an einem Freitag den Schochet bei Verrichtung seines Amtes. Der Unglückliche wurde sofort in Stücke gehauen und den Hunden vorgeworfen, die übrigen Schuldigen ermordet, die Synagogen, welche vorher blos versiegelt waren, gänzlich zerstört und die Pentateuche zerrissen. — Der Schah verlangte zwar später die Ursache dieser Gewaltthätigkeiten zu wissen, doch blieb die Sache vorläufig ungeahndet, da bei den oftmaligen Empörungen in diesem Lande die Befehle des Herrschers oft nicht anerkannt werden. Nach dem Tode des Schah und der Entsetzung des Ministers Ismael blieben die ganzen Gräuel unbestraft.

Sechs Tagereisen von Ispahan liegt Kaschan, eine Stadt, welche durch ihre Seidenfabriken berühmt ist. Ich habe dort prachtvolle Taleth (Gewänder zum Gebrauch beim Gottesdienst) gesehen und einen derselben in meine Heimath gesandt. Die jüdische Gemeinde in Kaschan zählt 180 Familien. Sie lebt in der unerträglichsten Bedrückung.

Wir kamen an einem Freitag in die Stadt und wollten dort den Sonnabend ausruhen. Die Karawane hielt außerhalb der Thore in einer Karawanserei. Ich erkundigte mich nach dem jüdischen Stadtviertel, und wollte mich dorthin begeben, doch kaum ließ ich mich auf der Straße blicken, so umringten mich eine Menge

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Gassenjungen und Pöbel. Meine europäische Kleidung erregte Mißfallen, und unter dem Schimpfrufe „Giaour“ (Hund) warf man mich mit Steinen. Die geringste Gegenwehr hätte mich in noch ärgere Gefahr gebracht, so groß ist der Haß der Perser gegen Fremde.[1]

Der Nassi Mardochai nahm mich sehr freundlich auf und meine Ankunft wurde von der Gemeinde als ein besonderes Glücksereigniß betrachtet.

Am nächsten Tage legte ich meine Kleider aus Jerusalem an und ging auf die Straße. Ein Karawanengefährte, welcher mir zufällig begegnete, erkannte mich und rief laut: „Dieser Giaour ist ein Jude.“ Sofort benachrichtigte er den Karawan-Baschi von seiner Entdeckung und erzählte den andern Mitreisenden die Sache; Alle behaupteten dann, sie seien durch meine Gegenwart verunreinigt. Am Sonnabend Abend trat ich in europäischer Tracht arglos in die Karawanserei. Kaum war ich jedoch eingetreten, so entstand ein Tumult an dem geschlossenen Thor, welches erbrochen wurde, und ich hörte den Ruf: „Tod dem Juden!“ — Der Karawan-Baschi, der mir viel Theilnahme bewies, warf mir eilig einige persische Gewänder zu, versteckte mich in seinem Harem und schloß die Thür desselben. Er trat darauf der heranstürmenden Menge entgegen und fragte: „Was wollt ihr? hier ist kein Jude; wir hatten einen Hakim-Baschi unter uns, der in der Stadt, ich weiß nicht wo, zurückgeblieben ist.“ Der wüthende Pöbel aber schenkte dieser Erklärung wenig Glauben, umzingelte die Karawanserei und suchte mich allenthalben. Der Harem aber, als geheiligtes und unverletzliches Gemach, blieb verschont und tobend und fluchend zog sich endlich die Menge zurück. Nachdem alles ruhig geworden war, führte mich der Baschi zu einer nahe gelegenen Grube und rieth mir, in diesem Versteck zu warten, bis die Karawane vorbeiziehe. Mit spähendem Auge und Ohr, bei dem geringsten Geräusch meine Verfolger vermuthend, wartete ich. Um Mitternacht endlich nahte die Karawane, welche nach Teheran zog, und ich war erlöst.

[1] Messechet Berachot Cap. 9, B. 4, Fol. 60, erinnert an die Gebete, welche man beim Ein- und Ausgang einer Stadt sprach. Es scheint, als wenn damals den Juden dieselben Gefahren drohten wie heute.

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Fünfzehn Tagereiſen nordöſtlich von Kaſchan liegt die Stadt Yezd. Sie iſt bekannt durch die Fabrikation der bewunderungswürdigen Shawls. Es wohnt dort eine jüdiſche Gemeinde von 150 Familien, die ebenfalls unter dem Joche der ſchmählichſten Bedrückung ſchmachten. Ich habe dieſe Stadt nicht beſuchen können, aber von andern Glaubensgenoſſen, deren Verwandte dort anſäſſig ſind, Schilderungen ihrer traurigen Lage erhalten.

Capitel 32.

Teheran.

Es wohnen in der Hauptſtadt Perſiens etwa 500 jüdiſche Familien; ſie beſitzen acht Synagogen und haben mehre Mulahs, auch iſt ihre ſociale Lage bedeutend beſſer wie die der Juden in den Provinzen, was wohl hauptſächlich daher kommt, daß ſie direct unter der Aufſicht und am Sitze der höchſten Landesbehörden wohnen. Ein anderer Umſtand, welchem ſie dieſe beſſere Behandlung verdanken, mag auch der ſein, daß eine der Frauen des regierenden Schah eine Jüdin war. Unſere Glaubensbrüder beſchäftigen ſich größtentheils mit Handel, namentlich mit dem Verkauf von Perlen und Edelſteinen, mehre unter ihnen ſind Juweliere, Goldſchmiede, Steinſchneider und Aerzte.

Der Vater des regierenden Schah hatte die Gewohnheit, von Zeit zu Zeit das jüdiſche Stadtviertel perſönlich zu beſuchen, deſſen ganze Bevölkerung ihm dann entgegen ging, und ihm zu Ehren weiße Lämmer ſchlachtete, deren Fleiſch unter die Armen vertheilt wurde.

Ein beſonderer Vorfall, bei welchem ich vor den Rath des Schah entboten wurde, um in einem ſchwierigen Falle meine Anſicht abzugeben, iſt folgender. Es wohnten in Schiraz zwei Brüder, Mulah Ababi und Mulah Iſaak (Mulah bedeutet Chacham),

von denen der erstere aus irgend einem Grunde Apostat wurde. Er galt für einen der weisesten Mulahs Persiens und fand Zutritt am Hofe des Schah, worauf er alle Mittel und Künste aufbot, um sich in der Gunst des Monarchen festzusetzen. Er suchte durch Anwendung von Bibelstellen, welche der Regierung mißliebig waren, seine ehemaligen Glaubensbrüder zu unterdrücken, und bot sich dann diesen als Vermittler an, um dadurch Geld von ihnen zu erpressen. So hatte er denn besonders auf eine Stelle aus den Büchern Moses aufmerksam gemacht, in welcher es heißt: „Du sollst mit deinem Bruder keinen Wucher treiben, weder in Geld noch in anderen nothwendigen Lebensbedürfnissen. Mit Fremden magst du Wucher treiben, mit deinem Bruder aber sollst du es nicht.“ [1]

Es wurden in Folge dessen die Mulahs von Teheran, Mulah Nachmim und der Nassi Aga Ababi, nebst den angesehensten Juden der Stadt zu einer Versammlung vor die höchsten Beamten des Reiches entboten und von ihnen eine Erklärung der Stelle verlangt. Diese erklärten jedoch, daß sie nicht schriftgewandt genug seien, um den Text auszulegen, und fügten hinzu, daß in ganz Persien kein Mulah sei, der diese Frage beantworten könne. Es sei indeß ein Chacham aus Beth-el-Mikdaß in Teheran, der die Stelle erklären könne. Sie hatten damit mich gemeint und ich erhielt darauf mit mehren andern Juden eine Botschaft der Beamten, durch welche man mich zum Erscheinen vor ihnen einlud. Ich folgte dieser Einladung sofort, überreichte jedoch beim Eintritt ein Certificat des russischen Gesandten, bei welchem ich meinen Paß niedergelegt hatte und dessen Einfluß sehr groß war, auch erklärte ich, daß ich als Europäer ohne die Genehmigung meines Gesandten keiner fremden Obrigkeit unterworfen sei, daß ich indeß bereit sei, den Befehlen zu gehorchen und es für eine Ehre halte, vor der Reichsversammlung zu erscheinen. Als man mir darauf die bezügliche Stelle vorlegte und meine Auslegung forderte, erklärte ich frei, daß die Auslegung des Mulah Ababi falsch sei und setzte hinzu, daß in Europa die jüngeren Schüler, welche sich etwas in der Bibel umgesehen, eine bessere Erklärung

[1] 5. Buch Moses Cap. 23, V. 20. 21.

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des Textes zu geben verständen. Meine Deutung der Stelle sei folgende: „Du sollst keinen Wucher ziehen von deinem Bruder, wer es auch sei! Dem Fremden sollst du wohl Zinsen geben, aber deinem Bruder nicht.“ [1]

Die Versammlung nahm diese Erklärung mit Befriedigung auf. Ich bemerkte dann noch, daß es in Europa Sitte sei, über derartige Verhandlungen ein schriftliches Protokoll aufzunehmen, worauf man mir jedoch antwortete, die Sache sei nicht der Mühe werth. Die ganze Verhandlung, welche etwa eine halbe Stunde gewährt hatte, wurde von dem Dragoman Mulah Jacob verdolmetscht. Nach beendigter Sitzung ließ man mich fragen, ob ich den Baron von Rothschild kenne; man habe gehört, daß sich in Europa eine Familie dieses Namens befinde, welche sehr reich sei und von allen europäischen Monarchen sehr geschätzt werde. Wenn diese Familie wirklich so mächtig sei, warum sie dann nicht ihren Glaubensgenossen zu Hülfe komme? — Ich antwortete: Ich kenne nur den Baron von Rothschild persönlich, welcher im Jahre 1845 in Wien wohnte. Uebrigens wisse man in Europa nicht, in welch trauriger Lage hier unsere Brüder lebten, da dort ihr Loos ein viel besseres sei. — Damit war die Verhandlung zu Ende.

Der Palast des Schah, die Hofgebäude und die Paläste der Gesandten von Rußland und England bilden ein besonderes Stadtviertel, welches von den übrigen Stadttheilen durch einen Graben getrennt ist, über den eine Zugbrücke führt, und auf solche Art vor Aufruhr gesichert ist. Der Palast des Schah ist im arabischen Style gebaut mit gewaltigen Thoren versehen, deren Eingang an unsere Gefängnisse erinnert. Das eine dieser Thore ist der Stadt, das andere den Palästen der Gesandten zugewendet, beide führen in den Vorhof des Palastes des Schah. Wenn man in denselben hineingetreten ist, sieht man zwei große Vorhallen, deren eine der Thronsaal ist. Der Schah begiebt sich zweimal jährlich an dem Bairamfeste dorthin, um die Huldigung zu empfangen. Durch ein am Eingange befindliches Glasgemach sehen die Treuen ihren Herrscher. Der Thron selbst ist aus einem Marmorblock von

[1] Leviticus Cap. 25, V. 35. 36.

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ungefähr 15 Fuß Länge und 10 Fuß Breite gearbeitet. Er stellt eine Tribüne vor, welche von zwölf weiblichen Marmorstatuen, die in vier Gruppen an den Ecken stehen, getragen wird. Mehre Stufen führen auf den Thron, welcher mit den kostbarsten Edelsteinen geschmückt und sehr kunstvoll gearbeitet ist. Wie man behauptet, soll er allen persischen Schahs gedient haben. Der Kronsaal ist das ganze Jahr hindurch, außer an den Empfangstagen geschlossen, doch wird den Fremden der Besuch gestattet, und daher fand auch ich Zutritt. Im zweiten Saale sind die Bildnisse der Beherrscher von Persien an die Wand gemalt. In einem anderen Gemache sollen sich die Porträts der ältesten Könige des Landes befinden, doch kann ich darüber nichts mittheilen, da ich sie nicht gesehen habe.

Die Stadt Teheran treibt bedeutenden Handel. Die Straßen sind, wie in den wichtigeren Städten, gepflastert, doch sehen sie traurig aus, da die Häuser nach morgenländischer Gewohnheit nach der Straße zu ohne Fenster sind. Einen großartigen Eindruck machen die Läden, Bazare und Märkte. Die Bevölkerung besteht außer den Persern aus Juden und Christen.

Capitel 33.

Hamadan.

Nach dreimonatlichem Aufenthalt in der Residenz Teheran, wo ich noch einige unangenehme Auftritte mit dem obengenannten Apostaten erlebte, die jedoch ohne böse Folgen für mich waren, trat ich meine Reise nach Hamadan an.

Die Straße, welche dorthin führt, geht durch eine zwölf

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Tagereisen lange Wüste, theilweise von Gebirgshügeln durchbrochen und mit Gesträuch und Zwergbäumen belebt.

Auf den Rath des russischen Consuls legte ich russische Nationaltracht an, denn Rußland übt in diesem Lande eine fast magische Macht aus. Zwei geborne Russen reisten mit derselben Karawane und ich schloß mich ihnen an. Am vierten Tage unserer Reise waren wir von einander gekommen, als plötzlich ein großer Tumult entstand und Gewehrfeuer erschallte. Alles griff zu den Waffen, leider aber waren wir bereits von einer Schaar Räuber umringt und wurden zu Gefangenen gemacht. Diese Aramimischen Banditen (Nachkommen der Chaldäer) beauftragten zehn von den Ihrigen, uns in die Gebirge zu führen, während die Uebrigen den Kampf mit der Karawane fortsetzten. Man führte uns zunächst auf eine Ebene, die nicht fern vom Kampfplatze war. Die mitgefangenen Perser benutzten einen günstigen Augenblick, wo unsere Wächter etwas entfernt von einander waren, und entflohen, um sich wieder an die Karawane anzuschließen. Acht Mann von unsern Wächtern setzten ihnen nach, dadurch aber blieben die beiden Russen und ich mit zwei Banditen allein. Man hatte sich nicht einmal die Zeit und Mühe genommen, uns zu entwaffnen. Nach einem Zeichen des Einverständnisses entflohen wir plötzlich, indem wir die den früheren Flüchtlingen entgegengesetzte Richtung einschlugen. Unsere beiden Wächter sprengten hinter uns her, wir kehrten uns jedoch um, tödteten den einen, machten den andern zum Gefangenen und nahmen ihn mit uns zur Karawane. Dort hatte der Kampf ohne Erfolg fortgedauert und man hatte sich in Unterhandlungen eingelassen, die denn endlich dahin ausliefen, daß die Gefangenen gegenseitig ausgewechselt wurden und wir ein starkes Lösegeld zahlten, worauf wir um Mitternacht, zwölf Stunden nach begonnenem Kampfe, unsere Reise fortsetzen konnten.

Die beiden Russen und ich gewannen durch diesen Vorfall sehr in der Meinung unserer Karawanengefährten, da unser Gefangener die Abschließung des Vertrages mit den Räubern sehr erleichtert hatte. Auch an den folgenden Tagen wurden wir oftmals durch kleine Banditenhaufen angefallen, wobei die Gefahr indeß nur gering war. Auf dem ganzen Wege ist keine Kara-

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wanserei angelegt. Wir benutzten zu unserem Schutze die vielfachen Höhlen, welche wir fanden.

Im Gefolge der Karawane hatten wir eine große Anzahl Maulthiere, welche in wohlverschlossenen Särgen die Leichname reicher Perser trugen, die sich, wie wir oben mitgetheilt haben, bei dem Grabe des Stifters ihrer Secte, in Mesched Ali begraben lassen. Eines Abends hatten wir uns zum Schutze gegen den herabströmenden Regen in eine Höhle begeben, während wir die Särge am Eingange stehen ließen. Plötzlich löste sich von dem Gewölbe der Höhle eine große Masse Felsstücke und Gerölle ab und verschüttete den Eingang. Wir hielten uns für unrettbar verloren, fanden indeß nach langem Suchen einen anderen Ausgang. Die Särge aber waren verschüttet.

Nach zwei weiteren Tagereisen gelangten wir zu einem Strom, der die Grenze zwischen Persien und Medien bildet. Zum Hinüberkommen über denselben fand sich weder eine Brücke noch ein Boot und wir mußten uns entschließen, ihn zu durchwaten. Von da ab bis nach Hamadan ging die Reise ohne bemerkenswerthe Vorfälle ruhig fort.

Hamadan, die ehemalige Sommerresidenz des persischen Schah, ist eine durch ihren Handel sehr wichtige Stadt des Reiches. Die jüdische Gemeinde, etwa 500 Familien,[1] hat drei Synagogen und drei Mulahs. Der Nassi der Gemeinde ist Mulah Eliahu. Der zweite Mulah Namens Aron, ein bejahrter Mann, ließ einmal eine alte Mauer umwerfen und fand zwei Urnen, deren eine mit Gold-, die andere mit Silbermünzen gefüllt war. Auf meine Nachfragen erzählte man mir, daß dieser Vorfall gar nichts seltenes sei, vielmehr öfter vorkomme. Ich erinnerte mich dadurch an eine Stelle im Medrasch Rabba von Rabbi Simon, Sohn Jochaias (Buch 3, Cap. 17) und im Jalkot (Buch 3, Cap. 5), mit dem Texte Moses zu vergleichen.[2] Was in diesen Stellen vom Geldverbergen gesagt ist, findet sich also noch heute im Orient.

Innerhalb der Stadtmauer, nahe am äußersten Ende der

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[1] B. de Tudela S. 61 spricht von 50,000 Juden, auch erzählt er von dem weiter unten erwähnten Grabe Esther's und Mardochai's.

[2] 3. Buch Moses Cap. 14 V. 34. 40. 45.

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Stadt steht ein großes und schönes Gebäude, welches einen mit glasirter Fayence getäfelten Saal enthält. In diesem Saale befinden sich nebeneinander, nur von einem schmalen Durchgange getrennt, zwei Grabmäler, über denen sich bedeckte Katafalke erheben. Die Inschriften sind in hebräischen Lettern, doch kann man nur zwei Namen erkennen, auf dem zur linken Seite den Namen „Esther", auf dem andern den Namen „Mardochai". Das Haus gehört der jüdischen Gemeinde als Eigenthum und sie bewahrt auch die Schlüssel. Man wallfahrtet zu diesen Gräbern bei Beginn jedes Monats und am Purimfeste und liest dort das Buch Esther vor. Wenn man beim Lesen an gewisse Stellen kommt, welche der beiden Helden besonders erwähnen, so klopfen sämmtliche Anwesende stark an die Katafalke, gleichsam um zu sagen: „Hier liegen sie, die Retter unserer Väter! Hier ruhen sie, und wir lesen heute ihre ruhmreiche Geschichte!" Es geht die Sage, daß das Gemach zu der Versammlungsstunde sich ausdehnt, um mehr Menschen zu fassen wie gewöhnlich.[1]

Wenn der Stadt irgend ein Unheil droht, oder wenn sich die jüdische Gemeinde vor einer bevorstehenden Gefahr fürchtet, so opfern sie vor der Thür dieses Hauses Lämmer, deren Fleisch unter die Armen vertheilt wird. Eines Tages benachrichtigte man mich, daß ein solches Opfer gebracht werden solle, um eine der Gemeinde drohende Gefahr abzuwenden. Ich machte diesen durch Aberglauben irregeleiteten Leuten begreiflich, daß sie durch eine

[1] Ritter's Erdkunde, Buch 3, Th. 9, Westasien S. 124 u. 125 sagt von diesen Gräbern: Nahe der Moschee ist ein Hofraum mit Grabstätten, worunter eine das Grab der Esther und des Mardochai genannt. Es ist aus Backsteinen aufgeführt, hat zwei Kammern, davon die eine nur eine Vorkammer zu der anderen, und im Vergleich zu dem übrigen Bau modern erscheint. (Ritter führt nun weiter die Copien der hebräischen Inscriptionen von Sir Gore Ouseley und K. Porter an, die sich jedoch widersprechen.) In der ersten Kammer lagen nur schlechte Todtengeräthe, wie Lampen, Tragbahren ꝛc. Durch eine Oeffnung, die nur $1\frac{1}{2}$ Fuß hoch und weit, kriecht man in die zweite Kammer, darin zwei Holzgestelle, wie alte Sarkophage gestaltet. Es sollen die Grüfte jener berühmten Personen sein.

Ich fand aber nur ein Gemach, in welchem einige Schritte vom Eingange entfernt, das Grab des Mardochai ist; hiervon nur einige Schritte entfernt erhebt sich vom Boden eine ungefähr einen Fuß hohe Anhöhe, und dies ist das Grab der Esther. Beide Gräber sind durch eine Wand nicht getrennt.

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solche Handlung nur einen Götzendienst begingen, und daß unser Glaube ausdrücklich jedes Opfer außerhalb des heiligen Tempels zu Jerusalem verbiete. Ich war glücklich genug, für diesmal diesen Gebrauch zu verhindern und zu veranlassen, daß der Ertrag den Armen gegeben wurde.

Die persischen Juden glauben, Hamadan sei die alte Stadt Susa, da sich hier die Gräber Esthers uud Mardochais befinden. Ich glaube dies jedoch nicht. Die ehemaligen Könige Persiens hatten ihre Sommerresidenz in Hamadan und ihre Winterresidenz in Susa (persisch Sustar), welche Stadt 15 Tagereisen von der ersteren entfernt liegt und ein milderes Klima besitzt. Die Ruinen der Gebäude, welche von den ehemaligen Königen herrühren, bestätigen diese Ansicht.

Vier Tagereisen von Hamadan liegt Karmanschah, wo sich etwa 40 Judenfamilien befinden. Der Mulah dieser kleinen Gemeinde, ein sehr habgieriger Mann, benutzt in unwürdiger Weise den Aberglauben der Perser, indem er Amulette und Talismane für sie verfertigt. Ich machte ihm geeignete Vorstellungen darüber, was ihm nicht zu gefallen schien.

Die Stadt ist befestigt, sehr groß und treibt bedeutenden Handel. Man verfertigt dort sehr theure Teppiche. Große Moräste, die sich durch eine lange Gebirgskette ziehen, umschließen die Stadt.

Capitel 34.

Persien, seine Cultur, Sitten und Gebräuche. Rückkehr nach Bagdad.

Persien ist eins der fruchtbarsten und reichsten Länder des Erdballs, es erzeugt sämmtliche Bedarfsgegenstände seiner Bewohner und die Wohlfeilheit aller Produkte sowohl wie des Lebens überhaupt, ist fast unglaublich. Die Industrie ist blühend,

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der Handel weit verbreitet und großartig. Zahlreiche Karawanen durchziehen das Land, in welchem kostbare Gewebe, Teppiche, Shawls u. s. w. verfertigt werden, deren Pracht und Schönheit überall ein Gegenstand der Bewunderung sind. Köstliche Perlen, edle Steine, Diamanten, Smaragde und Rubinen habe ich in so großer Menge gesehen, wie in keinem anderen Lande der Welt. Sie bilden einen Hauptartikel des Handels, der größtentheils in den Händen der Juden ist.

Die Völker, welche heute die alten Staaten des Cyrus bewohnen, theilen sich in drei Hauptklassen, Muselmänner, Armenier und Juden. Die ersteren gehören, wie bereits oben gesagt, zu der Secte des Ali. Der Hoheit und Macht dieses Propheten müssen sogar die anderen Muhamedaner weichen. Die Anhänger dieser Secte haben, wie ich bemerkte, während sie knieend ihre Gebete verrichten, den besonderen Gebrauch, daß sie entweder einen kleinen Stein, oder ein Stückchen Holz oder einen Knochensplitter dabei benutzen und diesen Gegenstand mit der Stirn berühren. Es scheint dieser Gebrauch eine Erinnerung an ihre ehemaligen religiösen Ceremonien aus den Zeiten des Götzendienstes zu sein.

Der morgenländische Aberglaube beherrscht auch die Bewohner von Persien; sie beschwören die fatale Macht der bösen Geister. Nicht allein die Muselmänner, sondern auch die Juden hängen diesem Aberglauben an. Jeder Kranke zum Beispiel ist in ihren Augen ein Besessener, und die richtigen Heilmittel sind Beschwörungen. Man verfährt dabei auf folgende Weise. Es werden sieben Schüsseln mit verschiedenen Speisen gefüllt in das öffentliche Badehaus gestellt, dessen Thüren während der Nacht verschlossen bleiben. Ist am folgenden Morgen eine von den sieben Schüsseln berührt, so hält man dies für ein Zeichen, daß die bösen Geister die Speisen annehmen, den Kranken verlassen und dieser genesen solle; sind jedoch die Speisen unberührt, so wird auch der Kranke für unheilbar gehalten. — Ich hielt es für meine Pflicht, meinen Glaubensgenossen einige Vorstellungen über diesen Wahn zu machen, worauf sie mir fragend entgegneten: „Wer anders als die Geister wohl die Speisen in dem festverschlossenen Hause berühren könne?“ Ich antwortete lachend, daß vielleicht

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eine Maus davon fressen könne. Obgleich man aber meinen Aussprüchen sehr viel Gewicht beilegte, so war es mir doch nicht möglich, ihnen diesen Aberglauben ganz zu benehmen.

Trotz des Aberglaubens sind indeß die Perser in der Regel sehr gebildet. Sie sind schöne, kräftige und tapfere Menschen und von hohem Wuchs. Ihr Hochmuth ist außerordentlich groß und ihre feindliche Gesinnung gegen jeden Fremden, der nicht ihrer Nation oder ihrem Glauben angehört, ohne Grenzen. Sie speien ihm ins Gesicht, sowie sie auch die häßliche Gewohnheit haben, im Innern ihrer Wohnungen an die Wände zu speien.

Die Kleidung der Männer besteht in einem Obergewande mit sehr langen engen Aermeln, jedoch ohne Kragen; einem weiten europäischen Beinkleide und einer Art Wamms (Kaftan), welches sie Antero nennen, bis auf die Füße hinabreichend und zu beiden Seiten längs den Beinen aufgeschlitzt, welches fest um den Körper anschließt. Die Kopfbedeckung ist eine hohe Mütze von Schaffell. Sie tragen einen langen rothgefärbten Bart, während die Haare, auf dem Kopfe geschoren, zu beiden Seiten der Schläfen lang herabhängen.

Die Frauen tragen ein an der Brust offenes, bis zur Hüfte herabreichendes Gewand von Seide oder Leinen, welchem sich übermäßig weite Beinkleider anschließen. Den Hals, die Hände und Füße schmücken sie mit Geschmeide. Wenn sie ausgehen, tragen sie einen weißen Schleier. Die jüdischen Bewohner Persiens kleiden sich nach derselben Sitte, nur müssen die Frauen statt des weißen Schleiers sich eines schwarzen bedienen, wenn sie öffentlich erscheinen. Die persischen Frauen sind sehr fleißig und geschickt, jede hat ihre Arbeit und sie sind es, welche die kostbaren Shawls und Stickereien verfertigen.

Die Perser kennen den Taback nicht. Männer und Frauen rauchen Tombaco. Sie trinken sehr vielen Thee und bedienen sich beim Essen nur der Hände, ohne alle Instrumente. Das Innere der Häuser ist mit Teppichen und Spiegeln geschmückt.

In jeder Stadt befindet sich ein von einer Mauer umschlossenes Gebäude, in welchem ein Verwandter oder Jünger Ali's sein Grab hat. Diese Gebäude bilden einen sicheren Zufluchtsort für Jeden, der den Arm der Justiz zu fürchten hat,

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und jeder Muſelmann, der einen ſolchen Zufluchtsort erreicht hat, wird öffentlich beſchützt und erhalten.[1] Die Juden und Chriſten genießen dieſes Vorrecht im Hauſe des Achunt, welches ebenfalls ein Aſyl für Sträflinge und Verfolgte iſt. Sie werden dort aufgenommen und ſicher erhalten. — Nur der Achunt hat das Recht und die Macht, Jemanden von einer Obrigkeit zur andern führen zu laſſen. Wird ein Angeklagter für unſchuldig erklärt, ſo iſt er völlig frei und genießt ſichern Schutz; wird er indeß zur Gefängnißſtrafe verurtheilt, ſo bleibt er an öffentlichen Zufluchtsorten entweder ſo lange bis die verwirkte Gefängnißſtrafe abgelaufen iſt, oder bis zum Tode des Achunt, wonach er völlig frei wird.[2]

Bei den perſiſchen Muſelmanen herrſcht der beſondere Gebrauch, daß, wenn zwei geſchiedene Eheleute ſich ſpäter wieder vereinigen wollen, die Frau erſt einen Anderen heirathen und ſich von dieſem ſcheiden laſſen muß, ehe ſie ſich mit ihrem erſten Mann wieder verbinden darf.

Der Uebertritt eines Juden zum muſelmaniſchen Glauben wird zum Gegenſtande eines öffentlichen Feſtes gemacht. Nachdem der Uebertretende die vorgeſchriebenen Reinigungen vollzogen hat, wird er prächtig gekleidet in die Moſchee eingeführt, wo ihn der Achunt empfängt und ihm einen neuen Namen giebt. Darauf ſetzt man ihn auf ein reich gezäumtes Pferd und führt ihn im Triumph unter Muſikbegleitung in der Stadt umher, bei welcher Gelegenheit ihn Jedermann begrüßt und ihm Geſchenke überreicht.

Im Monat November oder December jeden Jahres verſammeln ſich die Bekenner der Secte Ali's einen ganzen Monat hindurch täglich zwei bis drei Stunden, um den Todestag des Stifters ihrer Religion feierlich zu begehen, welchen ſie von einem Juden getödtet glauben. Während der drei letzten Tage (Katel, Mordtage, genannt) dieſes Feſtes werden Trauergeſänge angeſtimmt. Wenn ein Jude es wagen ſollte, während dieſer Zeit ſich auf der Straße zu zeigen, ſo würde ihn ſofortiger Mord bedrohen.

Die Chriſten in Perſien leben unter einem faſt gleichen Joche wie die Juden. Die letzteren erfreuen ſich indeß einer größeren

1 Vergl. 4. B. Moſes Cap. 35, V. 11 u. 25.
2 4. B. Moſes, Cap. 35, V. 28.

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Handelsfreiheit. Beide aber, Christen sowohl wie Juden, dürfen keine Sklaven halten.

Meine Glaubensbrüder in Persien haben mich wiederholt gebeten, in Europa eine Schilderung ihrer wirklichen Lage zu veröffentlichen. Ich habe dies versprochen und stelle dieselbe in allen Theilen im nächsten Abschnitte dar.

Capitel 35.

Die Lage der Juden in Persien.

Alle Juden in Persien erklären einstimmig, daß sie Nachkommen der ersten Verbannten des Königreichs Israel seien. Obgleich man eine kleine Anzahl aus den Stämmen Juda und Benjamin unter ihnen trifft, so ist es doch unzweifelhaft, daß die größere Mehrzahl von den zehn Stämmen herkommt.[1] Ein bemerkenswerther Beweis für diese Thatsache ist der, daß sie keinen Talmud besitzen. Sie stammen aus der Zeit des ersten Tempels, aus den ersten Jahrhunderten der Zerstreuung Israels. Sie können zwar hebräisch beten und lesen, auch besitzen einige Mulah (von Hamadan und Jezd) Exemplare des Talmud, des Schulchan Aruch und Gebetbücher, doch haben sie alle diese Werke erst vor einigen Jahren von Bagdad erhalten.

Das weibliche Geschlecht ist in Persien in geringerer Zahl vorhanden, wie in andern Ländern Asiens, auch werden sie mehr geachtet. Man trifft eine große Anzahl unverheiratheter Männer, denn wenn ein junger Mann sich verheirathen will, so muß er seine Frau kaufen, indem er dem Vater eine gewisse Summe bietet, und diese Kosten übersteigen sehr oft die Mittel der jungen

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[1] Talmud Messechet Keduschin Fol. 72. Ritters Erdkunde, 3. Buch, 9. Theil, Westasien, S. 42 u. f. stimmt mit dieser Behauptung überein.

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Leute. Aus diesem Umstande entstehen zuweilen sehr sonderbare Verbindungen. Wenn z. B. zwei Väter, deren jeder einen Sohn und eine Tochter hat, eine Familienverbindung beschließen, so veranstalten sie eine Doppelheirath, um den Kaufpreis zu ersparen und um die Kosten der Ausstattung ihrer Töchter zu heben.

Wird eine Hochzeit gefeiert, so veranstaltet der Bräutigam einige Tage vor seiner Trauung für seine Freunde ein Festmahl. Am Tage der Trauung begiebt er sich mit ihnen zu seiner Braut, wo der Mulah den priesterlichen Segen über das Paar ausspricht. Darauf kehrt der junge Ehemann in Begleitung seiner Verwandten und Freunde in seine Wohnung zurück, wo wiederum unter Musik ein Festmahl nach der Sitte der Eingeborenen gehalten wird. Gegen zehn Uhr Abends zieht er mit den Hochzeitsgästen zur Wohnung seiner jungen Gattin, welche von einigen derselben aus dem elterlichen Hause herausgeführt wird, und sobald sie auf der Schwelle erscheint, von den Verwandten des Mannes umringt wird. Von Verwandten, Freunden und dem ganzen Gefolge begleitet, zieht dann der junge Mann in seine neue Wohnung. — Die Männer heirathen in der Regel im Alter von 25 bis 35 Jahren, die Mädchen sind gewöhnlich 20 bis 22 Jahre alt.

Als eine besondere Sitte führe ich hier nochmals den bereits im vorigen Abschnitt erwähnten Aberglauben an, daß man jeden Kranken für besessen hält und wie mitgetheilt zu heilen versucht. Auf meine Bemerkungen über diese Thorheit wurde mir entgegnet, daß diese Sitte eine seit langer Zeit befolgte sei.[1]

Ein anderer sehr eigenthümlicher Gebrauch ist der, daß die Frauen, wenn sie einander Geheimnisse mittheilen, dies an einem nicht näher zu bezeichnenden Orte thun, eine Sitte, die in ganz Persien verbreitet ist. Man findet im Talmud etwas Aehnliches, wo erzählt wird, daß die beiden Töchter des Rabbi Nachman sich ihre Geheimnisse der Entbindung an demselben Orte mittheilten.[2]

Es giebt unter den persischen Juden einzelne, die sehr reich

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[1] 5. B. Moses Cap. 27, V. 17.

[2] Messechet Gitin Cap. 4, Fol. 45.

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sind; doch ist dieser Reichthum eine Quelle vieler Gefahren, so daß sie genöthigt sind, ihre Schätze wie ein Verbrechen zu verbergen. — Ihre gedrückte Lage fasse ich in folgende Hauptpunkte zusammen:

1) In ganz Persien müssen die Juden in einem von den übrigen Bewohnern abgesonderten Stadtviertel wohnen, denn sie werden als unreine Geschöpfe betrachtet, deren Umgang und Gegenwart verunreinigt.

2) Sie haben kein Recht dazu, Handel mit Stoffen zu treiben.

3) Sie dürfen auch in den Straßen ihres eigenen Viertels keinen offenen Laden halten, sie können dort nur Gewürze und Apothekerwaaren verkaufen, oder das Juweliergeschäft betreiben, worin sie denn auch einige Meisterschaft erreicht haben.

4) Unter dem Vorwande ihrer Unreinheit werden sie mit der größten Strenge behandelt und wenn sie eine von Muselmanen bewohnte Straße betreten, so werden sie von Pöbel und Knaben mit Steinen und Schmutz beworfen.

5) Aus demselben Grunde ist es ihnen sogar verboten, während des Regenwetters auszugehen, weil man annimmt, daß der Regen Unreinigkeit von ihnen abspüle, durch welche die Füße der Muselmanen beschmutzt würden.

6) Wird ein Jude als solcher auf der Straße erkannt, so wird er auf empörende Weise mißhandelt, die Vorübergehenden speien ihm ins Gesicht und man schlägt unbarmherzig auf ihn los, so daß er oftmals zu Boden fällt und nach Hause getragen werden muß.

7) Wenn ein Perser einen Juden tödtet, nnd die Familie des Getödteten kann zwei Muselmanen als Zeugen der That stellen, so wird der Mörder mit einer Geldstrafe von zwölf Tumanen (600 Piaster) bestraft; können aber zwei solche Zeugen nicht aufgebracht werden, so bleibt das Verbrechen ungeahndet, auch wenn es öffentlich begangen und bekannt ist.

8) Das nach hebräischer Sitte geschächtete, aber als Teref erklärte Fleisch darf an keinen Muselmanen verkauft werden; die Schächter sind gezwungen das Fleisch zu vergraben, denn selbst die Christen wagen es nicht davon zu kaufen, aus Furcht vor dem Spotte der Perser.

9) Tritt ein Jude in einen Laden, um irgend etwas zu

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kaufen, so ist es ihm verboten, die Waaren zur Durchsicht zu prüfen, vielmehr muß er in ehrfurchtsvoller Entfernung stehend nach dem Preise fragen. Berührt seine Hand unvorsichtiger Weise dennoch die Waare, so muß er dieselbe um jeden vom Verkäufer beliebig geforderten Preis behalten.

10) Zuweilen dringen die Perser in die Wohnungen der Juden und nehmen was ihnen gefällt. Bei dem geringsten Widerstande, den der Eigenthümer zur Vertheidigung seiner Waare erhebt, schwebt er in Gefahr, mit seinem Leben dafür zu büßen.

11) Bei dem geringsten Wortwechsel, den ein Jude mit einem Perser führt, wird jener sofort vor den Achunt geschleppt, und wenn der Kläger zwei Zeugen beibringt, zu einer starken Geldstrafe verurtheilt. Ist er zu arm, um diese Strafe zu zahlen, so muß er körperlich dafür büßen. Man entblößt ihm den Oberkörper, bindet ihn an einen Pfahl und zählt ihm 40 Stockschläge auf; entfährt dem Dulder bei dieser Procedur nur der kleinste Schmerzenslaut, so werden die empfangenen Streiche nicht gerechnet und man beginnt von neuem.

12) Ebenso werden Judenkinder, wenn sie mit denen der Muselmanen in Zank gerathen, sofort vor den Achunt geführt und mit Hieben bestraft.

13) Ein Jude, der in Persien reist, wird in jedem Funduk oder jeder Karawanserei, wo er einkehrt, gebrandschatzt; weigert er sich, einer solchen vom ersten Besten an ihn gerichteten Forderung Genüge zu leisten, so fällt man über ihn her und mißhandelt ihn so lange, bis er willfährig ist.

14) Wenn ein Jude, wie bereits angeführt, während der drei Tage des Katel (Trauerfest um den Tod des persischen Religionsstifters Ali) sich auf der Straße blicken läßt, so wird er unfehlbar ermordet.

15) Täglich und stündlich ersinnt man gegen die Juden neue Verdächtigungen, um Mittel zu erneuerten Erpressungen zu bekommen, denn materielles Interesse ist stets die Haupttriebfeder des Fanatismus.

Diese Punkte geben ein klares Bild der trostlosen Lage, in welcher die Juden in einem Lande schmachten, wo noch vor nicht langer Zeit eine Frau aus ihrem Volke Gemalin des Herrschers

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und einer ihrer Brüder erster Minister war.[1] Den einzigen Ersatz für alle diese Verfolgungen, Schmähungen und Bedrückungen finden sie in dem großen Vertrauen, welches man in geschäftlicher Beziehung zu ihnen hegt. Ihre Rechtschaffenheit im Handel ist von den Persern in dem Grade anerkannt, daß ein Jude, welcher fallirt, beim Achunt Schutz gegen alle Verfolgungen findet und dadurch Zeit gewinnt, mit seinen Creditoren zu unterhandeln.

Auch die jüdischen Aerzte werden sehr gesucht und üben auf die Großen des Reichs einen bedeutenden Einfluß, welchen sie edelmüthig zum Besten ihrer bedrückten Brüder anwenden. — So ist das erhabene Wort der Schrift in Erfüllung gegangen, wenn es sagt: „Ob ihr auch unter allen Völkern zerstreut und verfolgt sein werdet, ich werde euch nie ganz verlassen.“[2]

Die Christen sind in Persien, wenn auch nicht eben so schwer, doch beinahe so gedrückt wie die Juden. Sie hatten sich vor längerer Zeit mit der Bitte um Schutz an den Papst gewendet, was jedoch nichts gefruchtet hat.

Nach meiner Rückkehr aus Afrika und nachdem ich in Paris im Jahre 1858 meine Reiseberichte unter dem Titel „Cinq ans de voyage en Orient de 1846—1851“ edirt hatte, wandte ich mich, in Erfüllung der an mich ergangenen Bitte, um Schutz für meine unglücklichen Glaubensbrüder in Persien flehend, mit einer Denkschrift an den Sultan, an den Kaiser der Franzosen und an die Königin von England.

Die Denkschrift an den Sultan lautet folgendermaßen:

An Se. Kaiserliche Hoheit den Groß-Sultan der hohen Ottomanischen Pforte.

Sire! Ew. Kaiserliche Hoheit geruhen, einen Blick gnädigen Mitgefühls auf das Blatt zu werfen, welches ein unbekannter Reisender, aber einer der treuesten Unterthanen Ew. Majestät zu den Füßen des hochherzigsten und gerechtesten Fürsten niederzulegen wagt, dessen Herrschaft von so vielen Völkern gesegnet sein wird.

[1] Schon Benjamin de Tudela S. 76 spricht von der Unterdrückung der Juden in Persien. — Rabbi Pethachia S. 176 schildert diese Verfolgungen genauer.

[2] 3. Buch Moses Cap. 26. V. 44.

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Der Unterzeichnete, welcher diese Zeilen unternimmt, hat sich die Mission auferlegt, die Länder zu erforschen, welche der Ewige der väterlichen Regierung Ew. Kaiserlichen Hoheit anvertraute, und mitten unter der zahlreichen Bevölkerung des großen Ottomanischen Reiches bemühte er sich, persönlich und am Orte selbst den socialen und religiösen Zustand der letzten Trümmer einer Nation zu ermitteln, welche seit dem graueſten Alterthum durch ihr Mißgeschick, durch ihre geprüfte Hingebung und durch ihren unerschütterlichen Glauben bekannt ist; seine vielfachen Nachsuchungen und seine ernsten Forschungen über das Schicksal der zehn Stämme Israels verpflichten ihn, die Resultate seiner Bemühungen, seiner Studien und seiner oft gefahrvollen Reisen bekannt zu machen. Seit mehren Jahren hat er die Lebensumstände seiner Glaubensgenossen, der treuen Unterthanen Ew. Kaiserlichen Hoheit, getheilt um der Wahrheit die Ehre zu geben, seine Thränen mit den ihrigen gemischt, da er sie zu trocknen nicht die Macht besaß. Der einzige Trost, den er seinen unter der Last des Unglücks gebeugten Brüdern zu bieten vermochte, war das Versprechen, die Stimme der Wahrheit erheben zu wollen und dafür zu sorgen, daß sie Ew. Kaiserliche Hoheit vernehme.

Die Vorsehung selbst hat meine bescheidenen aber ununterbrochenen Anstrengungen unterstützt. Vermöge ihrer Eingebung haben Ew. Kaiserliche Hoheit geruht, das Glück ihrer Völker durch neue gesetzliche Vorschriften zu sichern, welche wesentlich dazu beitragen werden, um meinen Glaubensgenossen eine regelmäßige und erträglichere sociale Lage zu schaffen. Aber welche Zeit wird noch verrinnen, ehe die Wohlthaten des neuen Gesetzes, welches das Heil des Ottomanischen Reiches nur befördern kann, in einige unwirthbare Gegenden dringen, welche, entfernt von der Hauptstadt, mit dieser bis jetzt nur allzuseltene Verbindungen unterhalten! — Wann wird der Tag der Gerechtigkeit und Menschlichkeit für meine Brüder anbrechen, die in den gebirgigen und so zu sagen unzugänglichen Gegenden Kurdistans zerstreut an den äußersten Grenzen des Reiches ein Pflanzenleben führen, an den Boden gefesſelt in der vollständigsten Unwissenheit, von kurdischen Stämmen umringt, deren stürmische Willkür oft keine Zügel kennt, und deren Rohheit, Grausamkeit und Raubsucht die Israeliten in dem

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merkwürdigsten Zustande der Bedrückung niederhält. Das väterliche Herz Ew. Kaiserlichen Hoheit war von erhabenem, mitfühlendem Streben für das Glück Ihrer treuen Unterthanen erfüllt, wir bauen auf den entschiedenen und großmächtigen Willen Ew. Kaiserlichen Hoheit, wie auf die höchste Gerechtigkeit des Ewigen, welche Ew. Majestät in allen ihren Unternehmungen geschützt hat und alle diejenigen fördert, welche auf dem Wege des Guten zum Wohle der Menschheit wandeln."

Nachdem er ein treues Bild der Lage seiner Glaubensgenossen vor der Bekanntmachung des Hati-Houmajum gezeichnet, nachdem er das persische Reich besucht, wo der unwürdige Zustand und die Bedrückung der Israeliten seit Jahrhunderten unerhört an die alte ägyptische Sklaverei und an die babylonische Verfolgung erinnert, hat der unterzeichnete Verfasser einen Bericht in dem Werke zusammengestellt, welches er die außerordentliche Ehre hat zu den Füßen des gnädigsten und ruhmvollsten Sultans niederzulegen.

Einige Züge dieses wahrhaftigen Bildes sind düster, sie verdienen gekannt und ihrem wahren Werthe nach abgeschätzt zu werden (Kurdistan, S. 61, 64—66; Persien, S. 160, 226).

Der unterzeichnete Verfasser spricht nur in seinem Namen; er erfüllt eine innige Pflicht und ein heiliges Versprechen, indem er seine flehende Stimme zu Gunsten so vieler Menschen erhebt, deren Blicke unaufhörlich auf den erhabenen Wohnsitz Ew. Kaiserlichen Hoheit gerichtet sind, auf den größten der Sultane, der, von der Welt bewundert, hienieden die Vorsehung vertritt, welche ihn begeistert und ihn führt.

Wenn der bescheidene Pilger, der alsbald seinen Wanderstab wieder ergreifen wird, um seine Forschungen fortzusetzen, das außerordentliche Glück hätte, das erhabene Auge Ew. Majestät auf das verhängnißvolle Loos seiner Brüder von Kurdistan zu lenken, so würde er den Gipfel seiner Wünsche erreicht haben. Seine Worte sind zu schwach, um alle seine Gefühle passend wiederzugeben, er vermag nur seine Gebete zu richten hinauf zum ewigen Herrn, der Alles sieht und der Ew. Kaiserlichen Hoheit ein dauerndes Glück zu verleihen die Gnade habe.

Paris, 12. Juni 1856. J. J. Benjamin II.

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Die Denkſchriften an den Kaiſer der Franzoſen und an die Königin von England ſind mit unerheblichen Aenderungen dieſelben wie vorſtehende, und die an den Kaiſer der Franzoſen trägt daſſelbe Datum wie die an den Sultan; die an die Königin von England iſt vom 22. Februar 1857 datirt und überreicht.

Die Denkſchrift an den Groß-Sultan der Türkei ſandte ich durch Herrn Löb Kaufmann, Lederhändler zu Galata in Konſtantinopel, ab; die an den Kaiſer der Franzoſen überreichte ich ſelbſt in den Tuilerien und die an die Königin von England übergab ich dem Bureau der engliſchen Geſandtſchaft in Paris.

Das in franzöſiſcher Sprache abgefaßte Original der vorſtehenden Denkſchrift lautet folgendermaßen:

A Son Hautesse Impériale le Grand Sultan de la Sublime Porte Ottomane.

Sire!

Que Votre Hautesse daigne jeter un regard d'auguste compassion sur le pli qu'un voyageur obscur, mais un des plus fidèles sujets de Votre Majesté, ose déposer aux pieds du plus magnanime, du plus équitable des Princes, dont le règne sera béni par tant de nations.

Celui qui ose tracer ces mots s'est imposé la mission d'explorer les contrées que l'Éternel a confié au gouvernement paternel de Votre Hautesse Impériale, et ce fut au milieu des populations nombreuses de votre empire Ottoman qu'il s'efforçait de constater personnellement et sur les lieux mêmes l'état social et réligieux des derniers débris d'un peuple connu depuis la plus haute antiquité par ses désastres, comme par sa resignation à toute épreuve et par sa foi inébranlable; et ses recherches multipliées et ses investigations sérieuses sur le sort des dix tribus d'Israël lui font un devoir de faire connaître le résultat de ses labeurs, de ses veilles et de ses excursions souvent périlleuses. Pendant plusieurs années il a vécu de la vie de ses coreligionnaires sujets fidèles de Votre Hautesse Impériale, et pour rendre hommage à la vérité, il a souvent mêlé ses larmes avec les leurs, car il n'avait pas la puissance de les sécher. L'unique consolation qu'il a pu offrir à ses confrères courbés sous le poids du malheur, ce fut ma promesse d'élever la voix de la vérité et de la faire parvenir à Votre Majesté Impériale.

La Providence elle-même a daigné seconder mes humbles et mes constants efforts. Inspiré par elle Votre Hautesse Impériale daigna assurer le bonheur de ses peuples par des nouvelles prescriptions légales qui contribueront puissamment à créer pour mes coreligionnaires un état social normal, plus supportable. Mais combien de temps s'écoulera encore

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avant que les bienfaits de la nouvelle loi, qui ne peuvent que faire prospérer l'empire Ottoman, pénétreront dans quelques contrées incultes et éloignées de la métropole, avec quelle elles n'ont pu avoir jusqu'à présent que des communications assez rares. Quand luira le jour de justice et d'humanité pour mes confrères dispersés dans les contrées montagneuses et inaccessibles pour ainsi dire du Kourdistan, où sur les confins extrêmes de l'Empire ils végètent dispersés, attachés au sol, dans l'ignorance la plus complète de leur existence, entourés par des tribus Kourdes, dont l'indépendance turbulente ne connaît pas souvent de frein, et dont la rudesse, l'âpreté et l'esprit de rapines retiennent les Israëlites dans un état dégradant d'abaissement. Le coeur paternel de Votre Majesté Impériale fut touché d'une auguste compassion pour faire le bonheur de ses fidèles sujets; nous espérons dans la ferme et tout puissante volonté de Votre Hautesse Impériale ainsi que dans la suprême justice de l'Éternel, qui a protégé Votre Majesté dans toutes Ses entreprises et qui fait prospérer tous ceux qui marchent dans la voie du bien pour l'humanité.

Après avoir tracé un tableau fidèle de l'état de ses coreligionnaires avant la promulgation du Hati-Houmajoum, après avoir visité l'empire Perse, où l'abaissement et l'oppression des Israëlites sont inouïs et séculaires, où ils rappellent l'antique servitude de l'Égypte et les persécutions de Babylon, l'auteur soussigné en a fait un récit contenu dans l'ouvrage qu'il a l'insigne honneur de déposer aux pieds du plus humain et du plus glorieux des Sultans.

Quelques traits dans ce tableau véridique sont sombres; ils méritent d'être connus et appréciés à leur juste valeur (Kourdistan, p. 61, 64—66, la Perse, p. 160 et 226).

L'auteur soussigné ne parle qu'en son nom. Il accomplit un devoir de coeur et il remplit une sainte promesse en élevant sa voix suppliante en faveur de tant d'hommes qui tournent sans cesse leurs regards vers la demeure auguste de Votre Hautesse Impériale; vers le plus grand des Sultans admiré par l'Univers et qui remplace sur cette terre la Providence qui l'inspire et qui le guide.

Si l'humble pélerin, qui reprendra incessamment son bâton de voyageur pour continuer ses explorations, avait l'insigne bonheur d'attirer le regard auguste de Votre Majesté sur le sort précaire de ses confrères du Kourdistan, il serait au comble de ses voeux. Ses paroles sont trop faibles pour exprimer convenablement tout ce qu'il en ressentirait; il ne peut qu'élever ses prières vers l'Unique Maître, qui voit tout, et qui daignera accorder à Votre Hautesse Impériale un bonheur constant.

Paris, le 12 Juin 1856.

J. J. Benjamin II.

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Capitel 36.

Schlußbetrachtungen.

In meiner Kindheit hörte ich oft von den zehn Stämmen Israels sprechen, welche, wie man sagte, in ein düsteres gebirgiges Land, wohin nie ein Sonnenstrahl dringe oder ein Fremder seinen Fuß setze, verbannt seien. Man erzählte, daß sie dort ihre eigne Regierung hätten, daß sie unter ihren Königen in diesen fernen und unbekannten Ländern ganz den Cultus Israels im gelobten Lande befolgen und ein wunderbares Leben führen sollten, während wir, die Nachkommen der Verbannten beider Stämme Juda und Benjamin, in den Leiden des Exils, unter dem Joche fanatischer Nationen schmachten müßten.

Als ich heranwuchs, widmete ich mich den biblischen Studien und lernte aus dem heiligen Buche erkennen, daß die Stämme von Israel stets verderbter gewesen waren, als die von Juda und Benjamin, und sagte mir: Gott ist gerecht und gütig, warum läßt er die glücklicher sein, die es weniger verdienen? — Von diesem Augenblicke an begann ich an den Volkssagen zu zweifeln, und zwar um so mehr, da ich nirgend eine sichere Wahrheit über diese Frage in unseren heiligen Büchern fand, durch die ich mir Aufklärung verschaffen konnte. Das einzige Mittel dazu bestand in der persönlichen Anschauung durch Reisen und der Gedanke an diese beschäftigte mich unaufhörlich.

Nachdem diese Idee in späteren Jahren zur That geworden war, fand ich die gesuchte Aufklärung, und wurde zu den folgenden Schlüssen geführt.

Dasselbe Loos, welches uns, die Nachkommen von Juda und Benjamin, betroffen hat, ist auch das der zehn Stämme Israels gewesen. So wie wir aus einem Lande vertrieben sind und in einem andern ein neues Asyl fanden, so haben auch die zehn Stämme aus einem Lande in das andere wandern müssen, um

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sich nach allen Verfolgungen und Schicksalen einen neuen Zufluchtsort zu suchen. Wie uns, so ist auch ihnen hier Bedrückung und Schmach, dort eine mildere Behandlung und größere Freiheit zu Theil geworden. Sie haben ihre Canarinz, wie wir unsere Schobatnik. Mit einem Worte: Wir Alle haben gleiche Leiden erduldet, wir Alle haben gleiche Geschicke zu tragen gehabt. Nur der eine große Unterschied besteht zwischen uns und den zehn Stämmen, daß wir in heutiger Zeit, wo das Licht der Aufklärung über Europa sich Bahn bricht, wo Fanatismus der Toleranz und der Humanität weichen muß, mit jedem Tage mehr und mehr nach den geheiligten Rechten der Menschheit behandelt werden, daß Völker und Gesetzgeber unsere Gleichberechtigung mit allen andern Religionsbekennern anerkennen, während die Nachkommen der zehn Stämme Israel, unter den barbarischen Völkern des Ostens zerstreut, fort und fort in Jahrhunderte langer Unwissenheit leben, und noch heute unter dem Joche ihrer Unterdrücker als Parias, ohne Rechte und ohne Achtung, seufzen.

Alles was der Mund des Volkes von ihren Regierungen und Königen erzählt, reducirt sich thatsächlich auf das, was wir betreffenden Orts mitgetheilt haben. Die in den Wüsten Arabiens wohnenden und umherirrenden Stämme haben ihre eigenen Scheiks, und der gemeine Mann hat diese für mächtige Könige und Herrscher in unserer Bedeutung des Wortes gehalten. Ebenso haben die in den Gebirgen Afghanistans hausenden Völkerschaften ihre eigenen Herrscher und führen zuweilen blutige und erfolgreiche Kriege mit ihren Nachbarstämmen. Alles dies hat die so lange unter uns herrschenden irrigen Annahmen über die Macht und Größe der vertriebenen Kinder Israel veranlaßt.

Ich weiß nicht, woher sie ihre Kenntniß der Kabbala und ihren Glauben an verborgene und übernatürliche Mächte erhalten haben konnten. Wir wissen, daß es zur Zeit des ersten Tempels weder Kabbala noch Schemoth Hakedoschim (Namen der heiligen Geister, Engelnamen) gab, wenn es nicht der unaussprechliche Name Jehova (Schem) ist; denn für Schemoth halten wir die Schwerter, mit denen unsere Väter unter Saul und David die Feinde bekämpften, und für alle heiligen Gebetsformeln gab es nur das Schiath-Schema. Die kabbalistischen Abhandlungen dagegen stam-

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men aus der Zeit des zweiten Tempels. Ihr Ritus ist zum Theil das Werk der späteren großen Versammlungen. Wie der Talmud erwähnt, haben sie die Namen der Engel von Babylon mitgebracht. Woher und wie hätten die zehn Stämme eine so merkwürdige Kenntniß erhalten können? Es wäre dies um so unerklärlicher, da ich selbst sie so unwissend gefunden habe, daß sie nicht einmal lesen können. Wahr ist es indeß, daß sie in diese unwirthbaren Gebirge, in diese unzugänglichen Gegenden verwiesen sind. Die Entfernung ist groß und die Schwierigkeiten sind bedeutend, sie aufzusuchen, aber sie liegen doch nicht außer den Grenzen der Möglichkeit. Den Fluß Sambathion, von dem auch die Juden in Asien und Afrika sprechen, der Steine und Felsstücke fortschleudern und wie ein feuerspeiender Berg Lava auswerfen soll, um das Herannahen der Fremden und das Eindringen der Feinde in jene Gegenden zu verhindern, habe ich nicht gesehen, wohl aber habe ich eine Spur der zehn Stämme aufgefunden.

In unserer Zeit hat man, Dank den Entdeckungsreisen kühner Seefahrer, genaue und sichere Kunde der fernsten Welttheile erworben; durch die Fortbildung im Unterricht sind geographische Kenntnisse allgemein verbreitet und durch neue Erfindungen werden uns die entlegensten Orte nahe gebracht, so daß die Antipoden sich die Hand reichen können.

Es mag auch jetzt noch unbekannte Länder geben; doch sagt schon Alonzo da Ercilla in seinen Gedichten (Band 2, 27. Ges.): „Die Erdkugel ist mit Zonen bedeckt, welche die Menschen nicht erkennen; das Feld der Forschung, das vor uns liegt, ist zwar unendlich, aber der Kreis unseres Wissens erweitert sich mehr und mehr zu Erforschung neuer Wahrheiten."

Ehe ich den Orient, die Wiege der Menschheit, das Land der Geheimnisse, verlasse und von meinen dort zerstreuten Glaubensbrüdern, die seit Jahrhunderten unter dem Joche barbarischer und despotischer Völker seufzen, Abschied nehme, will ich noch einige allgemeine Bemerkungen über Reisen in diesen Ländern hierhersetzen.

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Ein europäischer Reisender, der an cultivirte Länder, an den Umgang mit civilisirten Menschen und an die Bequemlichkeiten des Lebens gewöhnt ist, wird, wenn er den Orient betritt, von dem Gefühle beherrscht sein, als sei er in eine ganz andere Welt versetzt, in eine Welt, deren Beschreibung meine Kräfte übersteigt. Bei jedem Schritte ist er von Gefahren, Mühseligkeiten und Entbehrungen aller Art umringt, die sich, je weiter er schreitet, vermehren. Ein jüdischer Reisender indeß befindet sich in einem ganz anderen Verhältnisse. Die Freundlichkeit, das Vertrauen, die Liebe und Achtung, mit der er überall in diesen Ländern von seinen Glaubensgenossen empfangen wird, lassen ihn die vielfachen Leiden und Beschwerden der Reise vergessen. Vorrechte aller Art werden ihm gestattet, und die Hochachtung, mit der man ihn aufnimmt, steigert sich fast zu einer allgemeinen Verehrung.

Auf mich hat vor Allen die fromme Glaubenszuversicht meiner Brüder, ihre sorgsame, bis ins kleinste genaue Beobachtung unseres Cultus und ihre Verehrung desselben den lebendigsten Eindruck gemacht. Diese Frömmigkeit ist wohl geeignet, einen europäischen Juden zu erbauen, die Erinnerung an dieselbe bildet für mich eine Ermuthigung für die Zukunft, und schwer wurde es mir, mich von diesen glaubensfesten Menschen zu trennen. Zwei Punkte verdienen besondere Erwähnung, es sind dies: die Kenntnisse und die Wohlthätigkeit, die Lebensweise und die traditionelle Gastfreundlichkeit unserer Brüder im Orient.

Wenn die Gelehrten des Orients im Allgemeinen sich durch ein gründlicheres, tieferes Wissen auszeichnen, so hat dies seinen Grund vornehmlich darin, daß sie am Urquell alles menschlichen Wissens wohnen, bei ihren Forschungen stets die heiligen Quellen vor Augen haben und dabei von einem unerschütterlichen Glauben beseelt sind, so daß in letzterer Beziehung selbst diejenigen, die am wenigsten schriftbewandert sind, anderen zum Muster dienen können. Die Gelehrten, und insbesondere diejenigen, welche aus dem gelobten Lande oder aus Europa kommen, werden mit der größten Verehrung, besser sogar wie ihre eigenen Gelehrten behandelt; in ihrer bilderreichen Sprache sagen sie, daß es Kronen seien, die ihr Haupt zu schmücken kämen.

Wer die orientalischen Sitten nicht kennt, kann sich kaum

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einen Begriff davon machen, mit welcher Rücksicht dort ein Reisender empfangen und behandelt wird. Sobald er dem Nassi vorgestellt worden, beeilt man sich, ihm alle mögliche Ehre, die sein Rang erfordert, zu erzeigen. Man kommt allen seinen Bedürfnissen zuvor; man giebt ihm Wohnung, Speise, Kleidung, kurz Alles, was er gebraucht, ohne den geringsten Ersatz dafür zu fordern. Man veranstaltet, so lange er an einem Orte verweilt, Festlichkeiten und Mahle, um ihn zu ehren. Und nicht allein so lange er bleibt, widmet man ihm alle Sorgfalt, nein, auch wenn er fortgeht, läßt man ihm dieselbe in erhöhtem Maße angedeihen. Sobald sich der Gast zur Abreise rüstet, hält es der Hausherr für seine erste Pflicht, ihn mit Allem Nöthigen für die Reise zu versorgen. Man berechnet die Tage, die er bis zu einem andern Orte unterwegs ist, und richtet danach die Vorräthe ein, damit es ihm an nichts gebreche. Man sorgt dafür, daß er sich einer Karawane anschließen kann, bezahlt die Kosten, und keiner der Glaubensbrüder unterläßt es, den Reisenden mit einer Gabe zu beschenken, deren er bedarf, und die stets seinem Range angemessen ist.

Aber nicht allein ihren Glaubensbrüdern widmen die Juden des Orients eine so edelmüthige Aufnahme. Jeder Reisende, jeder Tourist, weß Glaubens er auch sei, erhält überall von ihnen denselben Beistand, denselben Schutz, alle mögliche Auskunft, deren er bedarf, sei es in Bezug auf die Schwierigkeiten des Weges und die Beschaffung von Führern, oder in irgend einem anderen Falle. Trotz der großen Anzahl von Reisenden, die den Orient durchziehen, wird Jedem ohne Ausnahme dieselbe Gastfreundschaft geboten; sie wird als eine heilige Schuld betrachtet und in wahrhaft patriarchalischer Weise geübt.

Wird eine Karawane überfallen und der Reisende geräth in Gefangenschaft, so darf er sicher darauf zählen, daß man, sobald sein Unfall bekannt wird, nicht säumt, ihn zu befreien, man bringt das Lösegeld für ihn auf und dies besteht oft in einer beträchtlichen Summe.

Man kann hieraus schließen, wie leicht und bequem das Bereisen des Orients gemacht werden kann, leichter sogar wie in anderen Ländern, trotz der großen Schwierigkeiten der Wege

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und der Gefahren, denen der Reisende ausgesetzt ist. Da der Orient das Land der heiligen Quellen ist, so möchte ich meinen gelehrten und unternehmenden Glaubensbrüdern den Rath ertheilen, aus diesem ehrwürdigen Brunnen zu schöpfen. Für das Licht der Wissenschaft, welches sie dort verbreiten und fortpflanzen, würden sie eine ihrer würdige Aufnahme und ein bequemes Leben finden.

Ein großer Vortheil, den nur die Juden besitzen, macht diesen das Reisen im Morgenlande bedeutend leichter. Es ist dies die hebräische Sprache. Sie ist ein mächtiges Band, das einzige mysteriöse Mittel, welches es ihnen möglich macht, allenthalben vorzudringen und durchzukommen. Unter diesen zahlreichen Völkerschaften, wo so viele verschiedene Sprachen geredet und geschrieben werden, wird der reisende Jude in jeder Ortschaft wenigstens einige Personen finden, mit denen er sich verständigen und deren Angaben er den unbedingtesten Glauben schenken kann.

Man kann unbedenklich den Beweis versuchen, daß die von den heutigen orientalischen Juden befolgten charakteristischen Gebräuche und Sitten dieselben sind, die in der Bibel als den zehn Stämmen eigenthümlich bezeichnet werden, während die der europäischen Juden denen der Stämme Juda und Benjamin gleichen. Ich verweise zum Schlusse auf zwei dahin deutende Bibelcitate, deren erstes die Gastfreundlichkeit der zehn Stämme im Gegensatze zum Stamme Benjamin beweist.[1]) Die zweite Stelle erinnert an den Edelmuth der zehn Stämme gegen ihre feindlichen Brüder.[2]

Beide Citate lassen die Nationaltugenden der orientalischen Juden, welche noch heute dieselben sind, glänzend genug hervortreten.

Schließlich führe ich noch einige Gebräuche unserer Glaubensbrüder im Orient an:

1) Nach der Verrichtung des Gebets in der Synagoge stehen zwei Menschen am Eingange derselben, die Rosen oder eine wohlriechende Frucht in der Hand halten und solche jedem Vor-

[1] Richter Cap. 19, V. 14 bis 22.
[2] 2. Chronica Cap. 28, V. 8 bis 15.

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beigehenden hinreichen, der vor dem Genusse den dazu gehörenden Segen ausspricht.

2) Wenn ein Israelit den andern besucht, so wird er beim Weggehen am Eingange des Hauses mit Rosenwasser besprengt, und erhält noch etwas davon, um sich damit Gesicht, Bart und Hände zu waschen.

3) Der Morgengruß ist wie bei uns, nach Mittag aber wird man mit den Worten „Friede mit Euch!“ begrüßt, zu mehreren zugleich sagt man: „Gott mit Euch!“ worauf jene erwiedern: „Segne Dich Gott!“

4) Ein Israelit, der mit einer Karawane wandert, legt keine Taleth und keine Tephilim (Gebetzeuge) an, sondern liest jeden Morgen und Abend Criath Schema (ein Abschnitt aus dem Pentateuch, in dem die Einheit Gottes beschrieben).

5) Die in den Gebirgen Kurdistans wohnenden Juden tragen nicht Zizith (Schaufäden) den ganzen Tag wie wir, sondern nur in der Synagoge.

6) Die Scheidungen werden ausgeübt wie bei uns, hinsichtlich der Verlobung aber findet der Unterschied statt, daß jeder Vater für seine Tochter bis zum zwölften Jahre die Traumünze annehmen kann. Dieser Umstand verursacht große Unannehmlichkeiten, denn nachdem die Verheirathete älter wird, und der Mann ihr nicht gefällt, weigert sie sich, ferner bei ihm zu bleiben und sie kann den Mann, ohne einen Scheidebrief von ihm zu nehmen, verlassen, was ihr das Gericht gestattet.

7) Mitunter läßt man sich durch einen Boten trauen, indem man durch denselben der Verlobten eine Traumünze schickt; bei der Verheirathung muß aber dasselbe von dem Bräutigam selbst noch einmal geschehen.

8) Stirbt ein Mann ohne Kinder zu hinterlassen, so heirathet der Bruder des Verstorbenen die Wittwe.

9) Will Jemand zwei Frauen heirathen, so muß er dafür genügende Gründe angeben, z. B. daß er von der ersten Frau keine Kinder, oder nur Mädchen hat. Die Nichtjuden heirathen auch ohne solchen Grund zwei Frauen.

10) Manche, die eine zweite Frau heirathen, verpflichten sich

nur, ihr Essen zu geben, aber keine Kleidung, wofür sie dann ihren Verdienst behält.

11) Hält sich ein Mann in einem fremden Orte lange Zeit auf, so bestellt er sich für die Zeit seines Aufenthaltes eine Frau, die er aber nachher nicht mitnimmt.

12) Kleine Küchlein, die noch keine Federn haben, werden gegessen. Die Zeichen für den Genuß erlaubter Vögel und Fische sind ihnen viel mehr bekannt als uns.

14) In der Sabbath- und Festnacht kommt nach Mitternacht vor den Hof des Nassi (Gemeindevorsteher) ein Sänger, der bis zu Tagesanbruch Lieder singt; dasselbe geschieht, wenn ein sehr geachteter Fremder sich bei ihnen aufhält.

Capitel 37.

Rückkehr nach Konstantinopel.

Ich hatte genug vom Orient gesehen, um mir eine Kenntniß des Landes und seiner Bewohner, vor allem aber, um mir eine Einsicht in die Verhältnisse der dort wohnenden Juden zu verschaffen, und beeilte mich, dieses Land der Vorurtheile und Unterdrückung zu verlassen.

Zehn Tagereisen führten mich durch ein wüstes, von felsigen Hügeln durchzogenes Land. Einzelne Soldatenposten, welche längs der Straße aufgestellt sind, haben die Bestimmung, den Verkehr zu sichern und die durchziehenden Karawanen zu schützen, so wie die Grenzen des Landes gegen die häufigen Einfälle der nomadischen Horden von Babylon zu bewachen. Diese öffentlichen Wächter sind jedoch gefährlicher als die Räuberbanden, denn sie fallen selbst über die Karawanen her.

An der äußersten Grenze des Landes ist namentlich das Dorf Solata eine wahre Banditenschule. Umringt von allen diesen

Gefahren, verdankte ich einem früheren Glaubensgenossen, dem Militär-Oberarzte der Provinz, J. Beer, freundliche Rathschläge und anerkennenswerthe Gefälligkeiten. Auf seinen Rath legte ich die Kleidung eines Geistlichen an. Dann stellte er mich dem Oberbefehlshaber der Wachtposten vor, der mir auf seine Bitte Empfehlungen an die sämmtlichen Unterbefehlshaber der einzelnen Wachen gab. Dadurch wurde meine Reise gefahrlos, da ich unter sicherer Bedeckung bis an die Grenze gebracht wurde. Ohne weitere Unfälle erreichte ich Bagdad. Dort hatte ich das Unglück, durch einen Sturz vom Pferde das Bein zu brechen, und mußte einundzwanzig Tage zur Heilung desselben ausharren.

Am Mittwoch, den 12. Jjar (14. Mai) 1851 verließ ich Bagdad und trat meine Rückreise nach Konstantinopel an. Ich hatte mich einer Karawane angeschlossen, die den Weg durch die Wüste reiste, welcher auf fünfzig Tage berechnet war. Die Karawane, bei der ich mich wieder für einen Arzt ausgab, zählte 200 Wohlbewaffnete, und bei der Abreise schloß sich uns noch eine andere Gesellschaft von 260 und später noch eine von 150 Personen an, so daß wir gegen 600 Mann stark waren.

Unter fortwährenden Angriffen der vielen Räuberschaaren, durch deren Gebiete wir zogen, langten wir am 27. Jjar (29. Mai) in Kirkuk an, wo wir uns mit einer andern Karawane von 600 Personen vereinigten und nun in einer Stärke von 1200 Menschen unseren Weg fortsetzten. Bis zum 8. Sivan (Juni) bestanden wir fast täglich ohne erhebliche Verluste kleine Scharmützel, vereinigten uns an diesem Tage mit einer dritten Karawane von 800 Personen, und waren nun an Zahl jeder Schaar von Räubern überlegen, weshalb wir mit dem Gefühle größerer Sicherheit unsere Reise fortsetzen konnten. Trotz dieser Uebermacht wurden wir jedoch schon am andern Tage von neuem angegriffen, wobei wir anfänglich mit einem Verluste von zehn Todten und fünfzehn Verwundeten zum Rückzuge genöthigt wurden, am folgenden Tage aber die Banditen überwältigten, sie verfolgten und ihnen 35 Kameele und 200 Schafe abnahmen.

Am 9. Sivan (9. Juni), drei Tagereisen von Karput trafen wir mitten im Wege liegend eine riesig große Schlange an, die von den Arabern Al-Hasse-Kalil genannt wird. Wir

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tödteten dieselbe, und ich hätte gern die Haut des riesigen Reptils mitgenommen, wenn mir dies nicht von meinen Reisegefährten gewehrt worden wäre. An demselben Tage trafen wir auch einen Löwen, den wir verscheuchten.

Von Karput an begannen die Ueberfälle und Entbehrungen in vergrößertem Maße. So bestanden wir am 9. Tamus (Juli) einen Kampf, der drei Tage und Nächte währte. Vom 14. bis 20. Tamus setzten wir unsere Reise ungehindert fort. An letzterem Tage aber wurden wir von einer doppelt überlegenen Schaar unversehens überfallen. Es entstand ein wildes und blutiges Gefecht, in dessen Verlaufe die Karawane zersprengt und geplündert wurde. Ich hatte mich bei Anbruch der Nacht vereinzelt auf einen Palmbaum gerettet und mich am andern Tage wieder mit einer Anzahl Gefährten vereinigt. Durch einen glücklichen Zufall fand ich eins meiner Kameele wieder, so daß ich doch nicht ganz entblößt war; ich rettete mit demselben mehre mir anvertraute Gegenstände. Drei Tage nach diesem Unfalle langten wir in Siwas an, von wo aus ich mich mit einer andern Karawane nach der Hafenstadt Samsun am Schwarzen Meere begab und mich von dort nach Konstantinopel einschiffte, wohin ich nach sechsunddreißigstündiger Fahrt am 10. Aw (8. August) gelangte.

Ende der orientalischen Reise.

Abreise nach Afrika.

Von dem Bedürfniß nach Ruhe getrieben, nachdem ich die Mühen und Entbehrungen so langer und schwieriger Reisen ertragen, entschloß ich mich, mich in Rumelien niederzulassen, was mir jedoch fehlschlug.

Nachdem ich die Trümmer meines Vermögens gesammelt hatte, durchreiste ich Serbien und Ungarn, kam nach Wien, durchzog Oesterreich, einen großen Theil Italiens und gelangte nach Rom. Von dort begab ich mich nach Livorno, schiffte mich nach Marseille ein, zog nach Cartesan in Spanien und von da nach Oran in Algerien. Von Oran aus bereiste ich dann zur See die ganze Nordküste Afrikas bis Tripolis und kehrte zu Lande zurück.

Capitel 38.

Reisen in Afrika.

Sitten, Gebräuche und Verhältnisse der Juden.

I. Aegypten.

Ich beginne meine Reiseberichte mit Aegypten, und zwar mit Alexandrien, da ich dieses Land schon auf meiner ersten Reise berührt hatte.

Obgleich es viele und große Merkwürdigkeiten in Aegypten giebt, so übergehe ich dieselben doch hier, da das Land der Pyramiden von gelehrten Reisenden vielfach beschrieben und in wissenschaftlicher und geographischer Beziehung bekannt genug ist; ich spreche hier nur von meinen Glaubensgenossen.

In Alexandrien bestehen zwei jüdische Gemeinden, deren eine von den Eingebornen, die andere von Italienern gebildet wird. Die afrikanische Gemeinde besteht aus etwa 500 Familien, die italienische aus etwa 150 Familien,[1] beiden steht indeß ein und derselbe Chacham vor. Er heißt Rabbi Salomo Chasan, ist aus Zephat gebürtig, ein reicher und gebildeter Mann, der nicht allein bei unsern Glaubensgenossen, sondern auch bei dem Vicekönig und den Consuln der europäischen Mächte in großem Ansehen steht. Jede Gemeinde hat ihre besondere Synagoge; die der Afrikaner ist ein großes alterthümliches Gebäude, von Steinen gemauert, neben derselben stehen mehre Gebäude, in denen die durchreisenden Juden aufgenommen und beherbergt werden. Die italienische Synagoge liegt in einer andern Straße,

[1] Benjamin de Tudela S. 107 spricht von 3000 Juden in Alexandrien.

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sie ist ein gewöhnliches einstöckiges Haus. Die afrikanische Gemeinde baut jetzt eine neue Synagoge nahe bei der Stadt, ein sehr großes und kostbares Bauwerk, und sie behauptet, daß an diesem Platze vor Jahrhunderten schon Juden gewohnt hätten. Die Synagoge liegt in einem merkwürdigen prachtvollen Garten, dem schönsten wohl, den es in Alexandrien und beinahe in ganz Aegypten giebt, Palmen, Datteln, Granatäpfel, Ethrock (d. i. die Frucht Hadar), viele der schönsten und seltensten der Blumen schmücken ihn.

Von den Verhältnissen der Juden in Aegypten und von ihren Beschäftigungen werde ich am Schlusse sprechen, und will jetzt nur auf eine mir aufgefallene Sonderbarkeit hinweisen. — In Alexandrien fand ich im Hause eines angesehenen afrikanischen Juden, den ich einmal am Sabbath besuchte, in einem Zimmer einen großen gepolsterten Divan, über welchen ein einziges eben so großes Deckbette gelegt war. Unter dieser einen Decke schlafen in friedlicher Eintracht die sämmtlichen verheiratheten Familienglieder mit ihren Frauen, jedes Paar in einer besonderen Ecke des Divans ruhend, der Vater und die Mutter des Hauses, der erwachsene Sohn mit seinem Weibe, der Schwiegersohn mit der Tochter u. s. w. Auf meine lächelnde Nachfrage, ob ein so sonderlicher und anstößiger Gebrauch allgemein sei, erhielt ich eine bejahende Antwort. — Ich wohnte während meines Aufenthaltes in Alexandrien bei einem Bankier, Chaim Musero, der auf europäischem Fuße lebte und auch häuslich so eingerichtet war.

Die Stadt selbst, ihr blühender Handel, ihre schöne europäische Bauart mit breiten Straßen und Märkten, sowie die herrlichen Anlagen um dieselbe sind zu allgemein bekannt, als daß ich den Versuch einer Beschreibung derselben wagen möchte.

Von Alexandrien fuhr ich auf einem arabischen Schiffe nach dem eine Tagereise entfernten Dorfe Machmadia am Nil, der durch einen Kanal bis nach Alexandrien führt. Bei Machmadia am Ausflusse des Kanals, ist derselbe durch drei große Thore gesperrt; sämmtliche Schiffe, die von Alexandrien kommen, werden vor den Thoren ausgeladen und ihre Fracht auf andere Fahrzeuge gebracht, welche sie dann weiter führen. Das Dorf Machmadia ist ein schmutziger Ort, von ungefähr 400 Arabern bewohnt. —

Die Bevölkerung besteht ursprünglich aus liederlichem Gesindel, öffentlichen Weibern, die Ibrahim Pascha, als er Alexandrien im europäischen Stile neu erbaute, aus den alten Straßen der Stadt austrieb, und die dann in Machmadia eine eigene Colonie gründeten.

Von dort fuhr ich wieder mit einem arabischen Schiffe nach Cairo. Die Reise dauerte sechs Tage. Die Nilfahrt ist eine überaus angenehme, die Landschaft reizend, fast jede Stunde trifft man Dörfer und Städte, und man bekommt Alles, was man bedarf; namentlich fand ich die von den Arabern Jetsch-Srir genannten kleinen Hühner sehr billig. Man zieht diese jungen Hühner hier in großen Schaaren, sie werden in sogenannten Brutöfen aus den Eiern ausgebrütet und sind sehr fett. Die zu diesem Zwecke angelegten Bruthäuser sind fast hermetisch gegen die Luft geschlossen, und immer in mehre Abtheilungen getheilt; die Araber, welche die Eier in dem Ofen herumdrehen, und überhaupt die Geschäfte bei diesen Anstalten versehen, sind von der großen Hitze, die in den Oefen zur Ausbrütung der Eier unterhalten sein muß, bleich und ausgedörrt, und man sagte mir, daß diese Leute nicht alt werden. An dem Nilufer sind große Gärten angelegt, in denen viele Gurken (arabisch Dilla), Melonen (Batich) und Kürbis (Kischua) gezogen werden. — Ich kam eines Tages in ein Dorf, um mir etwas Brod zu kaufen; es war keines zu haben, ein Araber aber bat mich noch einige Minuten zu warten, binnen denen er mir Brod verschaffen wolle. Er nahm darauf in Eile etwas Mehl und Wasser, machte einen Teig daraus, brachte ihn in Kuchenform und trug ihn in die Sonne. Nach wenigen Minuten war der Kuchen gar. Ich erinnerte mich dadurch an den Auszug der Kinder Israel aus Aegypten, die ebenfalls, wie uns die Bibel erzählt, den Brodteig auf der Schulter mitnahmen und in der Sonne ausbacken ließen. (Erzählung des Midrasch Rabba.)

Am sechsten Tage kamen wir in Baluk, dem Hafen von Cairo an. Es fährt auch ein Dampfboot von Machmadia nach Baluk, welches nur achtzehn Stunden zu der Fahrt gebraucht, da ich aber von der Gegend und den Menschen etwas sehen wollte, so benutzte ich ein anderes Schiff. Von Baluk nach Cairo führt ein eine Stunde langer Weg durch herrliche Gärten; die

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Landschaft ist von einer Menge Canäle durchschnitten, um bei den Ueberschwemmungen des Nil die Gewässer über dieselben zu leiten. Die Nilüberschwemmungen werden festlich gefeiert, die Bevölkerung macht Lustfahrten auf dem Wasser, fröhliche Musik erschallt und Freude herrscht überall, denn man erwartet dann ein fruchtbares gesegnetes Jahr, da bei dem Mangel an Regen der Nil allein die Felder befeuchtet.

In Cairo giebt es ebenfalls zwei jüdische Gemeinden, eine afrikanische und eine italienische, von denen die erstere ungefähr 6000 Familien, die andere 200 bis 250 Familien zählt.[1] Im Jahre 1846 ließen sich die beiden Gemeinden einen Chacham von Jerusalem, Eliahu Israel, kommen, da der frühere gestorben war. Er hat zwei Frauen; auch mein Wirth, bei dem ich in Cairo wohnte, Mailum Mose Mosero, Geldwechsler und Vater meines Wirthes in Alexandrien, hatte zwei Frauen. Beide Gemeinden zusammen haben acht Synagogen, unter denen sich eine befindet, welche Synagoge von Rambam (Maimonides) genannt wird, sie enthält mehre Gemächer, um durchreisende Fremde zu beherbergen. Die Stadt ist groß und stark bevölkert, aber die Straßen sind schmal und sehr schmutzig, doch werden sie der großen Hitze wegen dreimal täglich mit Wasser besprengt.

Von Cairo bis Altcairo, welches die Arabar Masar-al-Atik nennen, ist etwa eine kleine Wegstunde. Auf dem Wege dahin trifft man viele Ruinen, sowie auch die Stadt Altcairo fast ganz verfallen ist; es wohnen dort nur einige arme Araber und zehn jüdische Familien, die ebenfalls sehr arm sind und von den reichen Glaubensbrüdern in Cairo unterstützt werden. Zwei Synagogen finden sich in dem Orte, von denen die eine, Al-Karkujan, in Ruinen verfallen ist; die zweite, Al-Schamjan, zwar ein sehr alterthümliches Gebäude, befindet sich noch in gutem Zustande. Einige Juden nennen die letztere Synagoge Kenesseth-Eliahu, und behaupten, daß Elias dort erschienen sei. Sie wird innen von zwölf Marmorsäulen getragen, und hat zwei heilige Bundesladen, von denen die eine über der andern liegt; über der obersten befindet sich eine Inschrift in hebräischer Quadratschrift,

[1] Benjamin de Tudela S. 98 spricht von 2000 Juden.

die jedoch durch die Zeit verwischt und unleserlich geworden ist. Diese oberste Bundeslade ist sorgfältig verschlossen und man gestattet Niemandem, hinaufzugehen und sie zu öffnen. Ich bat den Schuldiener, mir dies zu gestatten, um zu sehen, was die Lade enthalte; er widerstand jedoch meiner Bitte und erzählte mir, er verwalte nunmehr 20 Jahre sein Amt, sei aber noch niemals hinaufgegangen, weil man glaube, daß der, welcher dies thue, in demselben Jahre sterben müsse. Er theilte mir ferner mit, daß diese Lade Handschriften von dem berühmten Esra enthalte, und damit diese nicht zu Schaden kämen, habe man die Lade so sorgfältig verschlossen. Als ich dies hörte, bestand ich um so mehr auf meinem Wunsch, konnte aber trotz aller Bitten und Vorstellungen nicht dazu gelangen, die Lade zu untersuchen, und als ich dies einsah, erklärte ich lachend, die ganze Geschichte sei gewiß eine Fabel, von irgend einem Chacham erfunden, nur um die Leute gläubiger zu machen, worauf man mich einen Reformer schalt, der nicht an Wunder glaube.[1]

Da mich die Sache indeß bedeutend interessirte, so stellte ich Nachforschungen und Erkundigungen darüber an, suchte in vielen Büchern nach irgend einer Andeutung über den Pentateuch, ohne jedoch etwas darüber erfahren oder finden zu können. Endlich im Jahre 1854, als ich in Tlemsan in Algerien bei einem gewissen Moses Sarbeth, einem gelehrten und reichen Manne logirte, der auch eine tüchtige Bibliothek besaß, nahm ich zufällig in einer langen Nacht einige Bücher zum Studiren zur Hand und fand im zweiten Theil des Schem Hagdolim beim Buchstaben Ajin (ä) Folgendes: „Im Jahre 5248 war Rabbi Obadja von Bartanura in Cairo und schrieb, als er von dort nach Jerusalem gereist war, einen Brief an seinen Vater wie folgt: Ich war in Alt-Mizraim und bin in die Synagoge von Elias gegangen; es war dort ein Pentateuch in Handschrift von Esra, welcher in einer Schachtel lag. Ein Reisender aus den westlichen Ländern hat den Schuldiener bestochen, den Pentateuch herausgenommen und ist damit fortgereist. Als er jedoch auf See war, litt er Schiffbruch, ertrank.

[1] Benjamin de Tudela S. 98 spricht ebenfalls von diesen beiden Synagogen, des Pentateuch erwähnt er jedoch nicht.

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und der Pentateuch ist mit ihm untergegangen. Der Schuldiener aber ist in demselben Jahre gestorben." — Der Verfasser des Schem Hagdolim fügt hinzu, daß man ihm bei seiner Anwesenheit in Alt-Cairo ebenfalls von diesem Pentateuch erzählte; er sei dann in die Synagoge gegangen, man habe ihm aber den Pentateuch nicht zeigen wollen, die Chachamim der Stadt indeß hätten ihm im Vertrauen mitgetheilt, die obige Angabe sei richtig und in der Bundeslade befinde sich nur noch die leere Schachtel. — Später fand ich im ersten Theile des Schem Hagdolim bei dem nämlichen Buchstaben wie im zweiten Theil, eine Stelle, wo der Verfasser erzählt, er habe später in den fünf Büchern Moses, die zu Amsterdam gedruckt seien, mit den Commentarien Chinach und Dewek Tow, in dem Abschnitte Waichi eine Notiz vom Rabbi Menachem Halevi gefunden, welche angiebt, daß der Rambam (Maimonides) die fünf Bücher Moses von dem Pentateuch abgeschrieben habe, welches sich in Alt-Mizraim befinde, und dieser Pentateuch sei zur Zeit der Talmudisten von Jerusalem nach Alt-Mizraim gebracht worden. Später hat der Rambam gehört, in Burgund befinde sich wirklich ein Pentateuch von der Hand Esra's, er sei darauf dort hingegangen, habe dasselbe untersucht nnd gefunden, daß die Parschioth, Petuchoth und Sethumoth ganz übereinstimmend mit dem von ihm in Alt-Mizraim abgeschriebenen seien. Das Datum dieser letzteren Thatsache sei der 28. des Monats Siwan (Jjar, Mai) gewesen. Daraus geht hervor, daß die ganze Tradition über diesen Pentateuch und seine Herkunft von Esra falsch ist. Ich hatte dadurch den gewünschten Aufschluß erhalten und freute mich, daß ich die ganze Sache von vorn herein für eine Fabel gehalten.

Außerhalb der Stadt Alt-Cairo zeigt man eine Synagoge, von der behauptet wird, sie sei das Bethaus des Moses, und die Juden nennen dieses Gebäude auch nach seinem Namen.[1] Die Tradition mag möglicherweise wahr sein, denn wir lesen im 2. Buch Moses, Cap. 9, V. 29, daß Moses zum Könige Pharao sagt: „Ich will hinausgehen vor die Stadt und meine Hände gen Himmel erheben."

[1] Benjamin de Tudela S. 102 spricht ebenfalls von dieser Synagoge.

Man findet noch mehre alte merkwürdige Sachen dort, z. B. von Joseph ein kleines Palastgebäude aus verschiedenartigen Steinen erbaut, welches nur im oberen Theile zerfallen ist. Es ist von einer Mauer umgeben und wird von den Arabern Beth-el-Joseph genannt. Wenn man oben auf die Terrasse des Gebäudes geht, so genießt man eine weit ausgedehnte Fernsicht bis in die Wüste.

Nahe bei diesem Gebäude befindet sich eine sehr tiefe Grube, in welche man durch 570 Stufen, die in den Boden eingehauen sind, hinuntersteigt; sie wird von den Arabern Bir-al-Joseph (Josephsgrube) genannt und sie behaupten, daß sie der Kerker gewesen, in welchen Potiphar den Joseph werfen ließ. Wenn man hinuntersteigen will, so gehen zwei Arabermädchen mit Licht als Begleiterinnen mit; man zahlt dafür 1 Piaster. Unten in der Grube aber findet man einen sehr frischen klaren Quell und auch einen Katafalk, von dem man behauptet, es ruhe hier der Diener Josephs, den sein Herr an dieser Stätte begraben ließ. In früherer Zeit ist es häufig vorgekommen, daß die Reisenden, welche diese Grube besuchten, von den Arabern unten erschlagen und beraubt wurden, was in heutiger Zeit durch die officiellen Sicherheitsmaßregeln verhütet wird.

Die Kleidung der ägyptischen Juden gleicht derjenigen, welche die Juden in der Türkei tragen; viele tragen einen weißen Turban, sowie überhaupt die Kleiderpracht bedeutend ist. Die Frauen tragen sich ebenfalls wie in der Türkei, nur unterscheidet sich ihr Kopfputz von denen der türkischen Jüdinnen; sie tragen nämlich einen rothen Fez, dessen Quast aus langen einzelnen Seidenfäden, die bis auf die Füße herabreichen, besteht. An jedem Faden ist unten ein silbernes oder ein anderes Schaustück ꝛc. befestigt, wodurch dieser Kopfputz ein bedeutendes Gewicht erhält. Ich habe einmal einen solchen Fez in der Hand gehabt und schätze sein Gewicht wohl auf zehn Pfund. Die Länge der Quasten mit den angehängten Schaustücken veranlaßt, daß ein förmliches Schellengeläute entsteht, wenn die Frauen auf der Straße gehen. Die

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allgemeine Schrift und Sprache ist die arabische, viele sprechen auch italienisch. Gegen Reisende sind sie sehr aufmerksam und freigebig. In der Synagoge fiel es mir auf, daß ihre Betonung bei der Vorlesung des Wochenabschnittes ganz anders sind, wie die der deutschen und der portugiesischen Juden. Die Betonung war indeß schön und macht einen besonders erbauenden Eindruck.

Die Häuser sind schön und im Innern reichlich ausgestattet, haben jedoch keine Fenster. Das Licht dringt oben von der Terrasse hinein. — Die Reichen leben fast ganz in europäischer Weise, namentlich werden, wie bereits oben angedeutet, sehr viele junge Hühner und Tauben gegessen, die ungemein billig sind.

Das Trinkwasser ist der Hitze wegen sehr flau, und man bedient sich daher besonderer, aus einer Art von bläulichem Thon gefertigter Kühlgefäße, welche gefüllt zur Nacht auf die Terrassen gestellt werden, dadurch wird das Wasser ziemlich kühl und trinkbar.

Ich schiffte mich von Cairo aus nach Damiette ein. Zu der Fahrt gebrauchten wir 8 Tage, weil der Wasserstand niedrig war, bei Hochwasser kann man sie in 4 Tagen zurücklegen.

Die Juden behaupten, Damiette sei das in der Bibel genannte Kaphtor, der Targum übersetzt es in Kaputkai[1] und mit diesem Namen bezeichnen es die Talmudisten.

In Damiette wohnen 50 Judenfamilien[2], sie haben eine Synagoge, aber keinen Chacham, sondern nur einen Schächter.

Unsere Glaubensgenossen beschäftigen sich dort vorzüglich mit dem Handel von rothen Fezen, Datteln, Taback, Baumwolle, Seide und anderen Producten. In der Stadt befinden sich die Consulate der europäischen Mächte.

Zwischen Cairo und Damiette findet man in einigen Städten vereinzelte Judengemeinden; sie sind indeß in eine so große Unwissenheit verfallen, daß sie nicht ein hebräisches Gebet verrichten können. Sogar der Schächter kann seine Dinim (Vorschriften) nicht hebräisch lesen, er hat sie in arabischer Sprache.

Sechs Stunden von Damiette, den Nil hinunter, liegt das Dorf Esba, dort warten die Schiffe auf günstigen Wind, um ins Mittelmeer fahren zu können.

[1] 1. Buch Moses Cap. 10, V. 14.

[2] Benjamin de Tudela S. 107 spricht von 200 Juden.

Ueber die Lage der Juden in Aegypten im Allgemeinen führe ich noch an, daß unsere Glaubensbrüder unter der dortigen Regierung glücklich leben und alle Freiheiten genießen. Ihr Handel dehnt sich nach allen Ländern Europas, namentlich nach England und in die fernsten Theile der Welt aus. Man findet große und reiche Bankiers unter ihnen. — Ich glaube, daß sie alle diese Freiheiten dem überwiegenden Einfluß der europäischen Consuln zu danken haben.

Für jeden Reisenden bietet das Land die größte Sicherheit dar.

Capitel 39.

II. Trabolus (Tripoli di Berberice).

Die Stadt Tripoli liegt am Mittelländischen Meere. Sie ist eine bedeutende Handelsstadt, deren starke Bevölkerung vorherrschend die Muselmänner bilden. Die jüdische Gemeinde zählt 1000 Familien. Sie hat vier Chachamim, welche Dajanim (Richter) genannt werden. Der Aelteste von ihnen heißt Rabbi Abraham Adadi, der zweite Rabbi Schalom Agaw, er ist blind, der dritte ist Rabbi Joseph Ruben und der vierte Rabbi Fredjah. Sie sind sämmtlich sehr tüchtig im Talmud und Codex unterrichtet. Die Gemeinde hat acht Synagogen, welche, so lange die türkische Regierung dort herrscht, groß und freundlich ausgebaut sind, auch besitzt sie Lehrer, welche die Kinder im Hebräischen und theilweise im Italienischen unterrichten. Der Chaid (Nassi) der Gemeinde ist Rabbi Schalom Titu, ein reicher und gelehrter Mann, der eine tüchtige Bibliothek (Jeschiwa) in seinem Hause besitzt, und wegen seiner Ehrenhaftigkeit sowohl bei dem Pascha als auch bei den Juden und Christen in hoher Achtung steht. Er ist Associé eines anderen reichen Geschäftsmannes, Namens Moses (arabisch Misani) und treibt bedeutende Handels-

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geschäfte nach Sudan; er bezieht Waaren aus Frankreich und Italien; die Araber aus Sudan kommen mit Karawanen zu ihm und bringen ihm Farben und Elfenbein, wofür sie europäische Artikel mitnehmen. Diese Araber schenken ihm ein solches Zutrauen, daß sie fast ausschließlich nur mit ihm Geschäfte machen, und wenn sie von Anderen kaufen, jedenfalls vorher seinen Rath begehren. Er ist etwa 40 Jahre alt, hat eine hübsche Frau und zwei Söhne, von denen der ältere Namens Eliahu 15 Jahre, der zweite, mit Namen Isaak, 12 Jahre alt ist. Er läßt seine beiden Söhne von europäischen Lehrern im Arabischen, Hebräischen und Italienischen unterrichten. Auch hat er zwei Töchter, von denen die eine, Asisa, 10 Jahre, die zweite 3 Jahre alt ist. Seine Mutter, die noch lebt, wird im Hause hochgeehrt. Seine Wohnung ist sehr reizend in einem Hofe gelegen, die Lebensweise des Hauses ganz europäisch, und die Wohnung nach Landesbrauch. Dabei ist er sehr religiös, und geht nie an seine Geschäfte, ehe er nicht mit den jungen Chachamim, deren mehre in der Stadt sind, zwei Stunden studirt hat; an jedem Sonnabend versammeln sich bei ihm die sämmtlichen Chachamim und die ganze Nacht hindurch wird der Talmud und die Geschichte studirt. Ich habe zwei Monate bei diesem ehrenhaften, gastfreundlichen und gelehrten Manne logirt, und theile als Anerkennung die obigen Notizen über ihn mit.

Es wohnen in der Stadt noch mehre andere tüchtige und geachtete Männer, die ich ebenfalls zu erwähnen mich verpflichtet fühle: Rabbi Joseph Chalifi, Makler beim französischen Consul, ein sehr reicher Mann, bei dem ebenfalls Sonnabends gelehrte Versammlungen gehalten werden. Ein dritter, Rabbi Chaim Siruji, hat eine tüchtige Jeschiwa in seinem Hause und mehre Chachamim, die bei ihm studiren. Letzterer hat zwei Frauen.

Die Gemeinde hat einen besonderen Vorsteher für das Armenwesen, Rabbi Jacob Rokeach, der zugleich die Kassengeschäfte der Gemeinde führt. Die Unterstützung für die Chachamim und die Armen wird in der Weise geleistet, daß jeder Kaufmann wöchentlich 5 Procent seines Geschäftsgewinnes zu diesem Zwecke giebt. Der Armenvorsteher geht jede Woche zu den Geschäftsleuten, rechnet die Bücher selbst durch und kassirt 5 Procent vom Gewinn ein.

Die Juden sind sehr religiös. An jedem Montage und Donnerstage schlichten die Dajanim die Prozesse und Streitigkeiten. Hat Jemand ein Verbrechen gegen die Religion begangen, so wird er vor den Kaid oder die Chachamim gebracht und mit Geldbuße oder mit Streichen auf die Fußsohlen bestraft. Morgens und Abends gehen die meisten jüdischen Einwohner zur Synagoge, um ihr Gebet zu verrichten, und an jedem Neumond fasten viele Männer und Frauen, im Neumond des Monats Ellul (September) fasten alle Juden bis auf den Versöhnungstag, ja es giebt sogar Frauen, welche die ganze Woche fasten. Am Ende der Woche wird eine große Mahlzeit gehalten, wozu Freunde und Bekannte eingeladen werden, und wer nicht kommen kann, dem wird verschiedenes Eingemachte gesandt. Am Sabbath und an den Festtagen gehen Alle zur Synagoge und verrichten mit großer Frömmigkeit ihre Gebete, wie ich es noch selten anderswo gesehen habe.

In der Synagoge fiel es mir auf, daß am Freitag Abend das Gebet Schemona Esre (stilles Gebet) vom Vorbeter laut vorgebetet wird, was nach dem Gesetze nicht gestattet ist. Auf meine Nachfrage wurde mir als Grund dafür mitgetheilt, daß sie früher in ihrer Unwissenheit blos den Sabbathtag gefeiert hätten, bis ein Chacham sie über die Feier am Freitag Abend belehrt habe; als Andenken daran hätten sie beschlossen, dieses Gebet laut vorbeten zu lassen.

Viele kleiden sich so, wie man es in Tunis thut, Andere nach der Tracht von Algier, viele Andere tragen eine besondere Kleidung, welche in einem langen Gewande bis an die Knie, einem kurzen Burnus, weißen Beinkleidern bis zum Knie und rothen Schuhen besteht. Die Frauen tragen als Kopfputz einen rothen Fez mit einem seidenen Tuche umwunden und mit verschiedenem Schmuck verziert, dazu ein langes Gewand und ein weites Tuch, welches vom Kopfe herabhängt und malerisch um den Oberkörper geschlagen wird. An den Füßen tragen sie Papus, aber keine Strümpfe. Die Hände und Füße sind mit Gold- und Silberringen geschmückt, die Nägel an denselben werden roth gefärbt, die Augenbrauen schwarz.

Die Juden wohnen in mehren Straßen zusammen, obgleich

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sie die Freiheit haben, an jedem beliebigen Platze ihren Wohnsitz zu nehmen. Man findet auch einige italienische Judenfamilien unter ihnen, die jedoch keine besondere Gemeinde bilden. Auch ist eine Familie Namens Selwa unter ihnen, welche aus Spanien eingewandert, früher dort Christen waren. Unsere Glaubensgenossen leben in Tripoli frei und glücklich, sie treiben bedeutenden Handel und sind sehr reich. Mehre von ihnen sind Beamte der Regierung beim Zollwesen. Ueber ihre Sitten und Gebräuche bei Geburten, Heirathen und Sterbefällen werde ich am Schlusse mit denen der übrigen afrikanischen Juden sprechen, da diese überall dieselben sind.

Das Klima in Tripoli ist sehr schlecht; es existiren dort namentlich schwere Augenkrankheiten, fast ein Fünftel der Bevölkerung ist damit behaftet und fast ein Zehntel von ihnen wird ganz blind, so daß ich niemals so viele Blinde gesehen habe wie dort. Dies bezieht sich jedoch nur auf die Eingebornen, während die Europäer das Klima besser ertragen und nicht mit diesen Krankheiten behaftet sind.

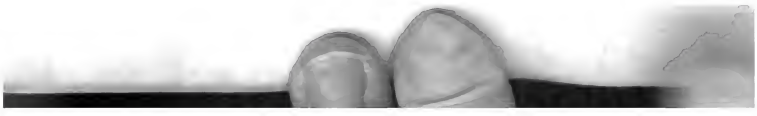
Im Osten und Westen der Stadt Tripoli liegen mehre Dörfer, in denen ebenfalls Juden wohnen. Zwei Stunden östlich liegt das Dorf Amrus; es finden sich dort fünfzig jüdische Familien, welche eine Synagoge und einen Schächter haben. Zwei Stunden weiter liegt das Dorf Tisuri mit siebenzig Judenfamilien. In diesen beiden Dörfern und ihrer Umgebung sind besonders schöne Palmenwälder, auch einige Weinberge. Von den Palmenbäumen wird ein Getränk mit Namen Lagwi (Palmwein) gezogen, das süß, wohlschmeckend und sehr leicht berauschend ist; es wird für 1 Piaster die Okka verkauft. Die Bereitung ist folgende: es wird von den kräftigen Palmbäumen die Krone abgeschnitten und auf den Abschnitt ein besonderes Pflaster gedeckt. Nach etwa fünfzehn Tagen treibt der ganze Saft des Baumes nach oben, man steckt dann nach Art der Zapfen kleine Holzsplitter in den Stamm und unter diesen die Gefäße, wohinein der Wein läuft. Man hat mir versichert, daß auf diese Art manchmal aus nur einem Baume für 1000 bis 1500 Piaster Wein gezogen wird; der Baum aber stirbt nach dieser Procedur ab.

Anderthalb Tage weit von dort trifft man das Dorf Mus-

lata, dicht an einer großen Gebirgskette nahe der Küste; dort wächst ein besonders guter Wein. Es wohnen in dem Oertchen 150 jüdische Familien, welche einen Chacham Namens Rabbi Mosche haben; der Nassi der kleinen Gemeinde ist Mailum Pinchas; auch besitzen sie eine Synagoge. — Wiederum anderthalb Tagereisen von diesem Orte, durch ein großes Sandgebirge, liegt das Dorf Zelitna, wo sich 100 Judenfamilien befinden. Auch hier wächst guter Wein, viel Getreide und einige Palmen. Nach weiteren anderthalb Tagereisen gelangt man zu dem Dorfe Mesurata, nachdem man eine kleine Wüste passirt hat. Es wohnen daselbst etwa 100 Judenfamilien, die zwei Synagogen haben. Bei diesem Dorfe findet man nur sehr wenig Palmen, aber guten Wein und Früchte. Es liegt hart am Mittelmeere und macht nicht geringe Geschäfte mit Malta.

Nach einer Seereise von vier Tagen kam ich zu der Stadt Bengasi. Dort wohnen etwa 400 Judenfamilien, die sich in zwei Gemeinden scheiden, deren eine die Gemeinde von Tripoli, die andere die Gemeinde von Bengasi genannt wird. Jede Gemeinde hat ihre besondere Synagoge, beiden zusammen steht ein Chacham vor, der Rabbi Isaak Chalfon.

Die Dörfer im Westen von Tripoli, welche ich besuchte, sind folgende: Acht Stunden von der Stadt liegt Sawia, ein Dorf, woselbst man sehr bedeutende Palmenpflanzungen findet, auch liefert dasselbe sehr viele Datteln in den ausländischen Handel. Die jüdische Gemeinde besteht aus ungefähr vierzig Familien mit einem Chacham und einer Synagoge. — Zwei Tage weiter durch Wüsten und Gebirge kommt man zu dem Dorfe Djebel, dasselbe liegt an beiden Seiten eines Berges und hat daher seinen Namen. Es wird hier nur Ackerbau und Viehzucht betrieben. Hundert Judenfamilien, deren Nassi Isaak Medina ist, wohnen in beiden Theilen des Dorfes; in dem einen Theile steht eine Synagoge, welche Grebe genannt wird, wohin Wallfahrten gemacht werden. Die Araber halten dieselbe für heilig und erzählen fabelhafte Wunder davon, woher es auch kommt, daß Alles, was in der Synagoge sich befindet, vor Diebstahl völlig sicher ist. — Eine Stunde von dort liegt ein Castell, Birs-al-Askar genannt, in welchem etwa 1000 Mann Militär liegen, um vorkommende



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aufrühreriſche Bewegungen zu unterdrücken. — Anderthalb Tagereiſen von dort kommt man durch eine Haidegegend, in welcher große Schafheerden weiden, zu dem Dorfe Ghurian, woſelbſt 120 jüdiſche Familien wohnen, deren Naſſi Chomani heißt. Das Dorf treibt Ackerbau und Viehzucht, auch findet man viele Feigenbäume. — Zwei Stunden von da liegt das Dorf Beneabbas. In dieſen beiden letzten Dörfern bauen die Bewohner ihre Häuſer merkwürdiger Weiſe in der Erde aus, was im Sommer den Vorzug angenehmer Kühle, im Winter der Wärme hat.

In allen genannten Dörfern ſind die Häuſer höchſt erbärmlich. In den Gemächern ſind Matten von Palmzweigen über den nackten Fußboden gebreitet, auf welchem ſich die Bewohner lagern, Teppiche findet man nicht. Die Bekleidung iſt ſchmutzig; auf dem Kopfe tragen ſie alle einen Fez mit einem kleinen Tuche umwunden, ein Gewand bis zum Knie, und Beinkleider, die eben ſo weit reichen. Sie tragen eine und dieſelbe Kleidung ſo lange, bis ſie in Lumpen zerfällt, wechſeln indeß am Sonnabend ihre Wäſche. Beim Ausgehen wird ein Burnus umgehängt. Die Frauen tragen denſelben Fez wie die Männer, und ein langes Gewand, welches mit ſilbernen Schauſtücken und Münzen geziert iſt. Um Kopf und Oberkörper wird ein Wolltuch geſchlagen, die Füße ſind wie bei den Männern unbekleidet, doch bei den Frauen mit Ringen geſchmückt. Ihre Feſttracht wird ſelten gewaſchen, ihre Wochenkleider niemals, weshalb dieſe denn auch ſehr ſchmutzig ſind.

Ich nahm eine paſſende Gelegenheit wahr, um bei einzelnen Glaubensgenoſſen nachzufragen, wie es komme, daß ſie ſo geringen Werth auf die Reinlichkeit des Leibes und der Kleidung legten, da doch die Bibel an mehren Stellen Vorſchriften über die Reinigung und Waſchung der Kleider gebe, ſie alſo neben dem Anſtoße, den ihre Unſauberkeit bei Jedermann errege, auch gegen das Geſetz handelten. Man erwiederte mir darauf, daß dies aus Furcht vor den Arabern geſchehe, die im andern Falle glauben würden, ſie ſeien reich und ſie dann täglich beraubten. Dieſer Grund hat etwas Wahrſcheinliches für ſich.

Zwei Stunden in der Tagesfrühe mahlen die Frauen das Getreide, woraus sie dann Brod backen, bei welcher Beschäftigung man sie stets singen hört. Auffallend war es mir, daß die Betten bei diesen Leuten in gutem Stande waren. Ihre Nahrung ist sehr schlecht; zwei ihrer Speisen, die sie für Delicatessen halten, einen Europäer jedoch anwidern, sind folgende: die Zu-meta und die Busi; die erstere wird auf folgende Art bereitet: man trocknet Gerste so stark, daß sie beinahe gebrannt ist, nachher wird sie gemahlen, das Mehl gesiebt und mit gemahlenem Kümmel gemischt. Zu diesem Gemisch gießt man etwas Wasser, drückt und knetet es dann in der Hand teigartig zusammen und speist es so mit rohen Zwiebeln; diese Speise wird mit großem Appetit gegessen und Wasser darauf getrunken. Die Busi wird folgendermaßen zugerichtet: man siedet Wasser und schüttet Salz und Weizenmehl hinein, rührt dies tüchtig durcheinander, so daß ein dicker harter Teig in der Topfform entsteht, der dann in eine große Schüssel geschüttet wird, dazu wird nun eine fette Sauce gemacht und über den Brei gegossen. Die ganze Familie setzt sich dann um die Schüssel herum, jeder greift, da man Messer und Gabel nicht kennt, mit der Hand in die Schüssel, reißt ein Stück von dem Brei ab, wälzt es mehrmals in der Fettsauce herum und verspeist dies. Das Ganze war mir so ekelerregend, daß ich es nicht ansehen konnte, und diese beiden Landesdelicatessen genießen Juden und Eingeborne, Kranke und Gesunde. Man kann sich daraus eine Vorstellung machen, mit welchen Unannehmlichkeiten der Reisende in solchen Ländern zu kämpfen hat.

Die Hauptbeschäftigung der Juden in diesen Dörfern ist neben Ackerbau und Viehzucht der Weinbau und die Pflanzungen von Datteln, Palmen und Granatapfelbäumen. Sie treiben dabei Weberei, verfertigen wollene Decken für den Handel, auch findet man Schmiede und Schlosser unter ihnen, welche namentlich die Wollkratzen machen. Arme Juden trifft man äußerst selten, viele sogar sind sehr wohlhabend, während fast Alle ihr Auskommen haben, da die Araber selbst gar keine Geschäfte treiben und deshalb Alles was sie gebrauchen von den Juden kaufen. Diejenigen, welche nahe am Meere wohnen, beschäftigen sich auch mit Wein- und Getreidehandel. — Wenngleich die Regierung ihnen alle

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Freiheiten läßt, so leiden sie doch vielfach unter dem Fanatismus der Araber.

Außer den genannten Dörfern giebt es zwar noch einige andere, in denen Juden wohnen. Ich habe diese jedoch nicht besucht und kann also nicht über sie sprechen.

Alle Juden dieser Dörfer stehen unter den Chachamim von Tripoli, denn die Gegend selbst gehört zu dem Paschalik dieser Stadt.

Capitel 40.

III. Tunis.

Von Tripoli nach Tunis kann man sowol zu Lande als zu Wasser gelangen. Ich wählte die letztere Art, da die Landreise sehr gefährlich ist, und schiffte mich Ende September 1853 auf einem arabischen Schiffe ein, welches nach Zerbi ging. Die Fahrt dauert bei günstigem Winde zwei bis drei Tage, wir wurden indeß von einem starken Sturme auf der See überfallen, so daß wir acht Tage hin und her geworfen und endlich wieder nach Tripoli getrieben wurden, wo unser Schiff nahe dem Hafen zertrümmerte, die Passagiere indeß gerettet wurden. Ich blieb dort wiederum während der Feiertage und schiffte mich dann zum zweitenmale ein, wo ich auch glücklich nach zwei Tagen in Zerbi ankam.

Bevor man die Stadt betreten darf, muß man eine zehntägige Quarantäne aushalten, wozu ein großes Gebäude nahe am Meere errichtet ist. Diese zehn Tage kommen dem Reisenden in dem schmutzigen Hause wie zehn Jahre vor.

Die Stadt Zerbi besteht aus zwei Theilen, deren einer nahe an der See liegt. In diesem Theile befinden sich die Geschäfte, die Fabriken u. s. w. Auch werden hier die besten Taleth

angefertigt, die es in der Türkei giebt. In diesem Stadttheile wohnen auch die europäischen Consuln und die reichen Mohamedaner. Eine halbe Stunde von dem am Meere liegenden Stadttheile und von ihm durch eine Sandstrecke getrennt, liegt der zweite Theil von Zerbi. Hier wohnen die Juden, etwa 500 Familien stark. Sie besitzen mehre Chachamim, von denen der erste Rabbi Salomo Matuk, der zweite Rabbi Nisim Semama heißt. Die Chachamim werden nicht von der Gemeinde besoldet, da sie selbst reiche Fabrikanten sind. Zwei Synagogen hat der Ort, beide ziemlich groß. In die eine dieser Synagogen gehen nur Cohanim (Priester) und sie wird auch die Priestersynagoge genannt; in keiner Stadt findet man so viele Priester wie hier, da fast ein Drittel der Gemeinde aus ihnen bestehen soll. Die Juden sind sehr religiös und im Talmud gut unterrichtet, im Gegensatz zu denen von Tripoli, welche ziemlich unwissend sind. Ihr Handel ist blühend, viele unter ihnen besitzen große Fabriken, in denen Taleth, Turbane, Woll- und Baumwollstoffe gefertigt werden, auch beschäftigen sie sich mit Ackerbau und Weinbau. Die Handelsverbindungen dehnen sich besonders nach Malta aus, auch kommen viele Europäer nach Tunis, um Geschäfte zu machen. Ihre Wohnungen sind nicht ganz schlecht, die Nahrung indeß ist nicht gut; man ißt meist Gerstenbrod, und nur bei Fremdenbesuch wird besonders Weizenbrod gebacken.

Man findet in Zerbi sehr viele Skorpione, und fast jedes Jahr hört man von einigen Todesfällen in Folge des Stiches dieser häßlichen Thiere.

Die Männer kleiden sich nach der Sitte von Tunis, nur daß sie keine Strümpfe tragen, sondern blos rothe Schuhe. Die Frauen tragen sich nach derselben Sitte, und wenn sie ausgehen, hüllen sie sich noch in ein weites Wolltuch, so daß man vom Gesicht nichts sehen kann. Auch sie tragen keine Schuhe und keine Strümpfe und wenn eine von ihnen dies doch thut, so glaubt man, sie sei eine Buhlerin und wolle sich auffällig machen. Die Häuser werden in der einfachsten Weise von Straßenkoth und Steinen gebaut, und innen und außen mit Kalk angestrichen. Ein Jeder ist sein eigner Architekt und baut in seinem Geschmack, doch kann dies nur zur Winterzeit geschehen, da es sonst an dem noth-

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wendigsten Requisit, dem Straßenkoth fehlen würde, der nur in dieser Jahreszeit durch die Regengüsse entsteht. Starker Regen dringt in die leichtgebauten Häuser, da diese nur mit Terrassen versehen, aber ohne Dächer sind. Im Jahre 1853 im Monat October regnete es drei Tage lang sehr stark; es wurden dadurch zwei Drittel der Stadt zerstört, fast alle Häuser beschädigt, und zwischen den beiden Stadttheilen hatte sich ein förmlicher See gebildet, so daß man, um von einem Theile zum andern zu gelangen, Schiffe und Kähne benutzen mußte. Auch die Waarenlager hatten großen Schaden gelitten.

Zwei Stunden südöstlich von der Stadt liegt das Dorf Degeb, mit fünfzig Judenfamilien und einer kleinen Synagoge. Die Gemeinde hat ungefähr eine halbe Stunde vom Orte entfernt eine andere ziemlich große alterthümliche Synagoge, welche sie Grebe nennen; dorthin gehen sie am Montag, Donnerstag und Sonnabend, sowie an den Festtagen, um ihr Gebet zu verrichten. Sie halten diese Synagoge für sehr heilig, indem sie erzählen, daß man hier einen Stein gefunden habe mit der Inschrift: „Bis hierher kam Joab ben Zeruja, — der Feldherr König Davids.“ Ich verlangte den Stein zu sehen, worauf man mir sagte, er sei eingemauert an die Stelle, wo die heilige Lade sei. Die Synagoge hat keine Fenster, wie diese an allen Synagogen in den tripolitanischen Orten fehlen. Man hat diese Einrichtung, wie man mir sagte, deshalb getroffen, damit nicht die Araber von außen her Feuer in die Gebäude werfen können.

Zwei Tage von Zerbi zur See liegt die Stadt Cabes, dort wohnen etwa 100 Judenfamilien. Ihr Chacham und Nassi ist David Cohen, welcher zwei Frauen hat, sehr reich ist und große Geschäfte nach dem 3 Tagereisen entfernten, in der Wüste liegenden Landstriche Jsrit macht. In den Fabriken von Cabes werden die Burnusse für das ganze tunesische Gebiet gefertigt; auch treiben die Araber starken Viehhandel. Kleidung und Sitte gleichen denen von Zerbi, nur tragen die Frauen das Gesicht unverhüllt, an den Füßen rothe Papus, jedoch ebenfalls keine Strümpfe. Die Juden beschäftigen sich großentheils mit Ackerbau, Wein- und Palmbaumpflanzungen. Die Araber treiben Viehzucht, namentlich Schaf-

und Kameelzucht. Im Jahre 1853 hat auch hier der Regen großen Schaden angerichtet.

Eine halbe Stunde von Cabes liegt das Oertchen Sara, mit etwa 50 Judenfamilien. Sie beschäftigen sich in derselben Weise wie die von Cabes. Der Gebieter des Ortes wohnt in Tunis und nur im Sommer kommt er auf 3 Monate in die Gegend. Mit ihm kommt der Steuereinnehmer der tunesischen Regierung, Kaid Nathan Schemana, nebst seinem Sohne Salomo und erhebt die Steuern für die Regierung. Der Steuereinnehmer, welcher Militärbedeckung bei sich hat, schlägt etwa eine Stunde von dem Orte seine Zelte auf und dorthin kommen die Araber der ganzen Gegend, um ihre Steuer zu bezahlen. Es finden sich an diesem Platze viele heiße Mineralquellen, die jedoch von den Landesbewohnern in ihrer Unkunde nicht benutzt werden. Ich habe mehrmals darin gebadet und eine kräftigende Wirkung wahrgenommen.

Ich führe noch einige Ortschaften an, welche ich nicht selbst besucht habe, über die mir indeß Mittheilungen gemacht wurden. Drei Tage weit von Cabes liegt in der Wüste die Landstrecke Jsrit, von den Juden Erez Hatmarim (Dattelland) genannt. Es wachsen dort auch sehr viele Palmen. Es liegen mehre Städte in dem Ländchen, die erste ist: Gaffa, zwei Tage weiter Tozer, wieder einen Tag weiter Nefta, und einen Tag weiter Gomar, wo das tunesische und algierische Gebiet aneinander stoßen. In allen diesen Orten wohnen Juden, welche einen gemeinschaftlichen Chacham Namens Rabbi Salomo Bursil haben. Er ist ein sehr gelehrter und rechtlicher Mann. Sie beschäftigen sich wie die eingebornen Araber mit Ackerbau und Viehzucht, mit Dattel- und Palmpflanzungen, Geschäfte treiben nur wenige. — Ich habe diese Mittheilungen aus dem Munde von Eingebornen.

Von Cabes nach Sfax kann man zu Lande und zu See reisen. Beide Reisearten sind sehr unsicher, die erstere wegen der Beduinen, die andere wegen der großen Unwissenheit der Schiffcapitäne. Ich zog die Seefahrt vor, doch hatten wir viele Beschwerden auszuhalten. Wir waren mehrmals in Gefahr an die Felsen geschleudert zu werden und Ebbe und Fluth machten uns viel zu schaffen. Wir gebrauchten zehn Tage zu der Reise, so daß uns am Ende die Lebensmittel ausgingen. Wir kamen bei der kleinen, 18 Stun-

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den langen und 4 Stunden breiten Insel Kerkena an, zwischen Cabes und Sfax. Die Insel ist unfruchtbar und unbebaut, nur wilde Datteln wachsen dort. Die Araber der Insel ernähren sich von Fischfang und verkaufen getrocknete Fische, womit wir die letzten 4 Tage unserer Fahrt uns ernährten. Die Inselbewohner zahlen keine Steuern; denn sie sind alle Soldaten. Am zehnten Tage kamen wir nach Sfax, und als ich die Gegend sah, glaubte ich in ein Paradies zu kommen. Die Straßen sind gepflastert und rein, die Häuser sehr sauber und freundlich, die Nahrung gut und schmackhaft. Es wohnen dort gegen 150 jüdische Familien, die zwei Synagogen besitzen. Der Chacham der Gemeinde heißt Rabbi Saul Chai, der Nassi Rabbi Eliahu Subach. Letzterer ist zugleich Zolleinnehmer der Regierung und sehr reich; ich logirte bei ihm. Auch einige italienische Judenfamilien wohnen dort. — Die Juden machen große Geschäfte, sie stehen in Handelsbeziehungen mit Tunis, Malta und Italien, wohin sie namentlich Wolle, Baumwolle, Getreide und Olivenöl ausführen. Ihre Kleidung gleicht der der Juden von Tunis.

In Sfax ist die Ebbe und Fluth des Meeres sehr stark, sie hält von Mitternacht bis Mittag, täglich 12 Stunden an und das Wasser zieht sich wol eine Stunde weit zurück, so daß die Schiffe trocken stehen. Zur See kann man von hieraus nach Mehedia, Micknin, Monastir und Susa gelangen, da ich aber bei der letzten Seereise gar zu viele Unbequemlichkeiten zu erdulden hatte, so schloß ich mich einer Karawane an und versuchte die Landreise. Mit mir reiste der Chacham von Sfax. Die Reise geht durch Gebirge und Steppen, und dauert 5 Tage.

Auf der Hälfte des Weges liegt ein etwa eine Stunde breites Thal, dessen Boden ganz weiß wie mit einer Salzkruste überzogen ist; die Araber nennen es Geh-Melch (d. h. Salzthal). Die Juden der Gegend behaupten, es sei dies der Ort, welcher im Psalm 60, V. 2 genannt ist und sagen, bis hierher sei Joab ben Zeroja mit seinem Heere gekommen, wie der Psalm angiebt. Ich fragte nach den Beweisen für diese Behauptung, worauf mir mein Reisegefährte, Chacham Saul, erklärte: es liege eine Stunde von hier ein Dorf, Elgemme, wo die Karawanen anhalten, dort finde sich ein großes altes steinernes Gebäude mit einer hebräi-

schen Inschrift, welche also lautet: Ad Khan Higia Joab ben Zeroja (d. h. bis hierher kam Joab, der Sohn Zerojas.) Ich war ungläubig und erwiederte, die Inschrift könne Gott weiß wer geschrieben haben. Er erklärte mir aber, die Inschrift sei in alten Buchstaben. — Ich war so neugierig geworden, daß mir die Zeit zu lange währte, ehe ich zu dem Orte kam, wo ich mich selbst überzeugen konnte. Sofort nach meiner Ankunft in dem besagten Dorfe nahm ich einen Araber, dem ich zwei Rajal (6 Piaster) gab, um mich herumzuführen und mir Alles zu zeigen. Mein Reisegefährte schloß sich mir an. Wir kamen zu dem alterthümlichen Gebäude. Dasselbe ist rund, in der Mitte liegt ein großer Hof, den ich auf etwa 160 Ellen lang und breit ausmaß. Das Portal des Thores ist etwa 15 Ellen hoch und 8 Ellen breit; das Gebäude selbst ist fünfstöckig und mag etwa 60 Ellen hoch sein. In jedem Stockwerke sind 60 Zimmer mit je einem Fenster. Die Breite der Zimmer mit den beiden Seitenwänden beträgt 30 Ellen. Unter den Zimmern im ersten Stockwerk befinden sich große Höhlen, zu denen man von innen gelangt, und unter diesen findet man eine, die sich bis Mehedia, etwa 12 Stunden weit, ausdehnt. Die Steine an den Gebäuden sind colossal groß und dick. Das oberste Stockwerk ist ziemlich ruinirt, da die Araber die Steine zu ihrem Häuserbau abbrechen. Im zweiten Stockwerke befindet sich an der nördlichen Außenseite die Inschrift. Ich kletterte durch das Fenster auf einen etwas vorspringenden Mauerstein, während der Araber mich von innen festhielt, und las die Inschrift. Mein Reisegefährte blieb im Zimmer und ich nannte ihm die einzelnen eingehauenen Buchstaben, die er aufschrieb. Die Form der Buchstaben ist nicht Quadrat, sondern gleicht der der Sefardim (portug. Juden). Die Buchstaben waren folgende: Ha, Nun (vom Ende), Thet, Waw, Daleth, Mem, Nun (vom Anfang), Waw, Thet, Samech, Pe, Kaph, Nun (vom Ende), Mem, Pe, Nun (vom Anfang), Waw, Thet, Daleth, Mem, Nun (vom Anfang), Chaw, Waw, Nun (vom Anfang), Zadi, Kaph. Manche Buchstaben konnte ich gar nicht erkennen. Im Deutschen sind dies folgende Buchstaben: H, N, T, W, D, M, N, W, T, S, P, K, N, M, P, N, W, T, D, M, N, K, W, N, Z, K. Ich konnte nichts daraus deuten, wenig-

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stens nicht das, was mir mein Reisegefährte gesagt hatte, doch mag es möglich sein, daß ich auf meinem gefährlichen Standpunkt an der Mauer etwas übersehen habe. Ich theile die Inschriftsbuchstaben deshalb mit, um andere gelehrte Reisende darauf aufmerksam zu machen und Veranlassung zu weiterer Forschung zu geben. — Ich glaube, daß die mir erzählte Volkssage unrichtig ist und daß das Gebäude von den Römern herstammt; die Inschrift mag später auf irgend eine unbekannte Art entstanden sein. — An vielen Stellen des Gebäudes fand ich die Namen europäischer Reisender, die auf ihren Fahrten hierhergekommen waren, und fügte den meinigen hinzu.

Von dort gelangte ich in $2^1/_2$ Tagen nach Susa. Wir mußten unsere Reise so beschleunigen, daß wir sogar die Nächte zu Hülfe nahmen und ich dachte dabei an Jacob, wenn er sagt: „Bei Tage hat mich die Hitze verbrannt, zur Nacht starrte ich vor Frost und der Schlaf war von meinen Augen verbannt."

Susa ist eine nahe am Meere liegende große Festung, in der eine starke Besatzung liegt. Die Juden theilen sich in zwei Gemeinden, eine afrikanische und eine italienische. Die erstere ist etwa 250, die italienische etwa 150 Familien stark. Beiden steht ein gemeinschaftlicher Chacham vor, Namens Rabbi Nathan Bursil. Der Kaid heißt bei den Arabern Chogi, von den Juden wird er Isaak genannt; er ist der Sohn des ersten Chacham zu Tunis, Rabbi Jeschua Basis und Schwiegersohn des Kaid Josef Semama zu Tunis. Der Vorsteher der italienischen Gemeinde ist Rabbi Jehuda Halevi von Gibraltar. Jede Gemeinde hat eine Synagoge, von denen die der Afrikaner ein großes alterthümliches Steingebäude ist, während die Italiener ein kleines einstöckiges Haus als Synagoge benutzen. Zum größten Theile sind unsere Glaubensbrüder sehr unterrichtet; ihre Sprache ist die arabische und italienische. Ihre Wohnungen und Nahrung sind sehr anständig, wie sie denn überhaupt wohlhabend, sogar reich sind. Sie treiben blühenden Handel mit Wolle und vorzüglich mit Olivenöl, welches letztere in bedeutenden Quantitäten exportirt wird. — Es wohnt auch eine Anzahl Christen in der Stadt, welche sich auf dieselbe Art mit Handel beschäftigen. Die Regierung läßt Juden und Christen alle Freiheit.

Zwei Tagereisen von dort liegt die Stadt Nabal, ein schmutziger Ort, rings von Gebirgen umschlossen. Dort wohnen gegen einhundert Judenfamilien. Ihr Chacham und Nassi, Rabbi Chay Algez, befindet sich meistens beim Bey in Tunis. Er ist nämlich ein sehr kluger Mann und versucht es durch algebraische Berechnungen die Zukunft zu prophezeien, woran der Bey entschieden glaubt. Die Gemeinde hat eine Synagoge. Handel treiben nur wenige Juden, die meisten beschäftigen sich mit Ackerbau. Sie sprechen arabisch.

Eine Tagereise von dort führt nach Hammamet (Bad). Es finden sich schöne Bäder und herrliche Anlagen in dem Orte und ich verweilte dort einige Tage zur Erholung. Eine halbe Tagereise von dem freundlichen Oertchen liegt Tunis.

In der Nähe der Stadt Tunis finden sich noch die Ruinen der alten Stadt Hannibals, der Nebenbuhlerin Roms.

Es wohnen in Tunis gegen 15,000 Juden der afrikanischen und etwa 1000, die sich zur italienischen Gemeinde halten. Die afrikanische Gemeinde hat neun Dajanim, deren erster der bereits erwähnte Rabbi Jeschua Basis ist. Er ist ein gelehrter, kluger Mann, der trotz seiner achtzig Jahre noch ein sehr scharfes Auge hat. Er ist reich und wohlthätig und versieht sein Amt ohne Besoldung. Der zweite Rabbi, Nathan Bursil, ist beinahe so alt wie sein erster College; er ist groß, stattlich und von edlem Ansehen, dazu gelehrt, reich und wohlthätig. Der dritte, Rabbi Joseph Bursil, Bruder des vorhergehenden, etwa fünfzig Jahre alt, ist ein besonders gelehrter Orientalist und Verfasser des Werkes Sara de Joseph (Livorno 1852). Bei ihm habe ich eine Zeitlang logirt, er hat eine Jeschiwa mit mehren Schülern, welche er ohne alle Vergütung unterrichtet, und studirt selbst fast Tag und Nacht, sich nur wenige Stunden Schlaf gönnend. — Der vierte Dajan ist Rabbi Abrah. Cohen, der fünfte Rabbi Abr. Askanasi, der sechste Rabbi Mosche Gasid, der siebente Rabbi Gay; die beiden letzten kann ich nicht nennen, da ich dieselben nicht kennen lernte. Die Gemeinde besitzt vier große Synagogen und über 50 kleinere. Es finden sich in der Stadt über 800 sehr unterrichtete Talmudisten, und auch die übrigen Juden sind nicht ungebildet.

Die italienische Gemeinde hat drei besondere Dajanim. Der

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erste von ihnen ist Rabbi David Bunan, der zweite Rabbi David Kartusu, der dritte Rabbi Joseph Lambrusu. Sie haben eine große und zwei kleinere Synagogen.

Von dem ausgedehnten Handel der Stadt Tunis, welcher sich über alle Länder Europas ausbreitet, brauche ich nicht zu sprechen, da er allgemein bekannt ist. Berühmt sind die Fabriken, in denen die Feze gemacht werden, so wie die Färbereien, welche beide meistentheils von Juden betrieben werden. Unter den Juden findet man viele sehr reiche, sogar Millionäre, auch bekleiden mehre von ihnen Posten bei der Regierung, z. B. der Kaid Rabbi Joseph Belaiz, Präsident der jüdischen Gemeinde, ist mit dem Nissan (Orden) decorirt; Kaid Nisim Semama, Schatzkanzler der Regierung; Kaid Salomo Bursil bekleidet ebenfalls ein Amt, und so giebt es noch viele, welche ich nicht aufzählen kann. Alle diese Männer kleiden sich europäisch, nur tragen sie den rothen Fez. Alle Juden in Tunis sind sehr wohlthätig und rechtlich; die Regierung läßt ihnen alle Freiheiten, doch leiden sie unter dem Fanatismus der Araber. Ihre Häuser sind meistens zweistöckig, sehr sauber, die Höfe vielfach mit Marmor gepflastert, auch ihre Lebensweise ist gut. Sie wohnen meist in einem besonderen Viertel zusammen, können jedoch beliebig jeden anderen Wohnort wählen. Das jüdische Viertel wird Chara genannt, es ist mit Thoren versehen, wird Abends um 10 Uhr geschlossen und Morgens 5 Uhr geöffnet.

Die Stadt Tunis ist sehr schmutzig; wenn es nur ein wenig regnet, steigt der Schmutz bis über die Knöchel. Sie ist mit einer Mauer umgeben und von einem sumpfigen Graben umringt, der im Sommer einen ungemein üblen Geruch verbreitet. Die Gegend ist eine überaus fruchtbare, die Gartenanlagen um die Stadt sind kostbar und mit den herrlichsten Fruchtbäumen und Tropenpflanzen, Springbrunnen ꝛc. geziert. Reizende Landhäuser liegen in den Gärten, von denen viele in den Händen unserer Glaubensbrüder sind.

Die Männer tragen weite Tuchbeinkleider, Strümpfe und Schuhe, dazu ein gesticktes Wamms und hängen einen Burnus über. Der Kopf wird ganz glatt rasirt; die Unverheiratheten tragen ein kleines schwarzes Käppchen, die Verheiratheten einen

Turban mit schwarzem Fez. Die Frauen tragen ein faltiges Gewand, weite Beinkleider von Seide oder Atlas, die vom Knie abwärts ganz enge anschließen und mit reichen Gold- und Silberstickereien verziert sind. Ueber das Ganze ziehen sie eine Art seidener Tunika ohne Aermel, die gewöhnlich aus zwei verschiedenfarbigen Stoffen besteht und bis zum Knie hinabreicht; den Kopf bedecken sie mit einem Fez, um welchen ein seidenes Tuch gewunden wird, dessen Enden lang herabhängen; auch tragen sie Schuhe und Strümpfe. Mit den Beinkleidern wird vorzüglich ein bedeutender Luxus getrieben, und man hat mich versichert, daß sie den Reichen oft 4—500 Realen kosten. Um die Taille tragen die Frauen eine Art Gürtel, welchen die unverheiratheten nicht anlegen. Auf der Straße hüllen sie sich in ein weites seidenes Tuch oder feines Wolltuch, lassen jedoch das Gesicht offen und heben die Gewänder bis ans Knie auf, um die Stickereien der Beinkleider sehen zu lassen. Sie sind zum größten Theil sehr schön, etwas stark, und gleichen in ihrer Schönheit ihren Schwestern in Bagdad, nur sind die Frauen in letzter Stadt mehr edel und schlank, während die Damen von Tunis mehr corpulent sind; die Bagdader Damen sind äußerst fleißig, die von Tunis hingegen sind dies nicht. Wie in Bagdad, so heirathen auch in Tunis die Mädchen vom dreizehnten Jahre an.

Ich führe hier noch eine besondere höchst merkwürdige Landessitte an. Es herrscht nämlich unter den Weibern der Eingebornen, Arabern sowohl wie Juden und Christen, ein starker Glaube an hölliſche Geister und Teufelsspuk, und man glaubt bei den verschiedenartigsten Anlässen an eine Influenz derselben. Wenn z. B. eine Frau erkrankt, und am dritten Tage nicht wieder besser geworden ist, so glaubt sie, Satanas oder einer seiner Gesellen verfolge sie, und da giebt es denn nach allgemeinem festen Glauben keine irdische Arznei zur Heilung der Krankheit, sondern die Frau kann allein durch eine Verbindung mit dem Bösen, durch eine förmliche Heirath, ihr Wohlsein wieder erlangen. Es werden dabei sonderbare Ceremonien beobachtet. Die Kranke ladet ihre weiblichen Verwandten und Bekannten zu einem Gastmahle ein. Es werden sieben verschiedene Gerichte gekocht und aufgetragen; die Weiber setzen sich dann um den Tisch herum, während die Kranke

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auf ihrem Bette liegt. Die Musik darf bei dem Feste nicht fehlen, und deshalb wird eine Partie Musikanten (Tambourin- und Paukenschläger) eingeladen, bei denen es jedoch Bedingung ist, daß sie blind sein müssen. Sitzt nun die Weibergesellschaft im Kreise um den Tisch herum, so nimmt die Aelteste von ihnen eine leere schmutzige Schüssel, füllt in dieselbe einen Theil von jedem der sieben Gerichte und trägt sie auf den Hof in die Kloake: das ist der Antheil für den bösen Geist. Darauf machen sich die Weiber selbst über den Rest her und verzehren ihn. Die Musikanten beginnen einen höllischen Spektakel auf Pauken und Tambourins, singen und heulen dabei besondere Gesänge, und nach vollendetem Mahle fangen die Weiber an zu tanzen und zu springen, wobei sie am Ende in solche Hitze gerathen, daß sie sich nach und nach aller ihrer Gewänder entledigen. Die Kranke wird vom Bette gezogen, in den Kreis der Tanzenden gerissen, auch ihre Gewänder werden abgeworfen und sie muß mit den andern in wilder Raserei tanzen; man kreischt und singt und schreit, so daß ein höllischer Lärm entsteht, bis am Ende Alle ermattet zusammenfallen und sich in wollüstigen Zuckungen auf dem Boden wälzen. In diesem Moment, glaubt man, vereinige sich der Böse mit der Kranken. Nach dieser wahnwitzigen Ceremonie muß die Kranke gesunden. Thut sie dies nicht, so glaubt man, der Teufel verschmähe sie, und giebt sie auf. Es tritt wirklich in vielen Fällen eine Genesung ein, die wol nur eine Folge der durch die geistige und körperliche Aufregung veranlaßten Blutwallungen und der Transpiration ist. Ist die Frau genesen, so trägt sie später, angeblich auf Befehl des Bösen, eine zweifarbige Tunika, wie ich oben angedeutet habe. Sie gehen in diesem Unsinn so weit, daß sie sogar dem bösen Geiste eine bestimmte Religion beilegen und sagen, er sei ein Muhamedaner, Jude oder Christ.

Der größte Theil der Weiber leidet an dieser wahnwitzigen Phantasie, jedoch verbergen sie die Ceremonien sorgfältig und strenge vor den Augen der Männer. Trotzdem suchte und fand ich Gelegenheit, mir die Sache einmal anzusehen. Es wohnte in Tunis ein jüdischer Schneider aus Polen, der eine von den eingebornen Frauen zum Weibe hatte. Ich besuchte denselben eines Tages und fand ihn höchst niedergeschlagen. Auf meine Frage

theilte er mir mit, daß seine Frau krank sei und er die Teufelsceremonie mit ihr begehen müsse, wozu es ihm an Geld mangele. Ich schalt ihn, indem ich ihn fragte, wie er als geborner Europäer solchen Unsinn dulden und veranstalten könne, worauf er mir entgegnete, er müsse dies der Verwandtschaft wegen thun, welche sonst glauben würde, er wolle seine Frau tödten. Ich rieth ihm nach kurzem Besinnen, er solle die Ceremonie vor sich gehen lassen, wir wollten beide in einem Verstecke als Zuschauer Theil nehmen. Er solle die Weiber ruhig gehen lassen bis sie die Tanzraserei begonnen hätten und dann plötzlich unter sie treten. Der Mann folgte meinem Rathe, bewaffnete sich aber mit einem Stocke, und im richtigen Momente zwischen die tanzenden Weiber tretend, begann er mit demselben dreinzuschlagen. Mit Geschrei lief die Gesellschaft im sonderbarsten Kostüm, manche halb entblößt, auseinander und zum Hause hinaus. Er aber prügelte noch einige Minuten tüchtig auf seine Frau los, brachte sie dann zu Bette und ließ sie liegen. Mein Rath war gut gewesen, denn nach zwei Tagen war die Frau vollkommen gesund und wurde nicht wieder vom Bösen geplagt. Ich durfte mich aber eine Zeitlang nirgend blicken lassen, da die Geschichte und meine Betheiligung ruchbar wurde und die Weiber sehr aufgebracht auf mich waren.

Ein anderes Mal war ich zu einer Gesellschaft gebeten, unter der auch eine Anzahl Frauen waren. Einer der anwesenden Eingebornen frägte mich, ob ich einmal einen solchen oben beschriebenen Spaß mit ansehen wolle, er wolle ihn zu veranstalten suchen. Er ging darauf zu den Musikern und ersuchte sie, die Musik und die Gesänge zu den Teufelheirathsceremonien zu beginnen. Dies geschah, und nach wenigen Augenblicken begannen die anwesenden Weiber, vom Klange der wilden Musik und Gesänge hingerissen, zu kreischen, zu singen und zu tanzen. Eine der ruhigern nur bat uns, der Sache ein Ende zu machen. Wir ließen die Musik aufhören; hätten wir dies nicht gethan, so würden wir sicher das ganze Spektakel vor uns gehabt haben, denn die Weiber waren auf einmal wie besessen geworden. Nachdem Alles ruhig geworden war, entfernten sie sich voll Scham aus der Gesellschaft.

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Die Chachamim der Stadt haben sich schon oft Mühe gegeben diese unsinnige Sitte abzuschaffen, was indeß stets ohne Erfolg geblieben ist.

Ebenso ist der Glaube an Hexen und Hexenkünste allgemein, ja es bieten sich sogar Weiber laut und öffentlich auf den Straßen zu Hexereien an, und wer Prophetien über seine Zukunft hören und Hexenkünste sehen will, der ruft ein solches Weib ins Haus und läßt es seine Experimente machen. Ich war neugierig, etwas davon zu sehen, und wollte zugleich den Leuten zeigen, daß die Sache albern sei; ich bat deshalb eines Tages, als zufällig ein solches Hexenweib vor einem Hause vorbeiging, wo ich zum Besuche war, das Weib herein zu rufen und ihre Künste machen zu lassen. Nur ungern that man dies. Hereingekommen und aufgefordert mir ihre Kunst zu zeigen, nahm das Weib ein Gefäß, ging schweigend zum Brunnen auf dem Hofe, füllte es, indem sie fortwährend unverständliche Worte murmelte, mit Wasser, kam dann zu mir und forderte mich auf, mit diesem Wasser mir Brust und Hände zu waschen und davon zu trinken. Mit Ausnahme des letzteren that ich dies, worauf mir das Hexenweib einen großen Erfolg ihrer Künste vorhersagte. Dann nahm sie sieben verschiedene Fruchtarten, Weizen, Mais, Erbsen ꝛc. und sieben Sorten Grünzeug, that Alles in einen Topf, goß Wasser dazu und stellte den Topf aufs Feuer. Bald fing das Gemisch an zu kochen und zu brodeln. Dieses Brodeln bildet die angeblichen Geisterstimmen, welche natürlich nur die Hexe allein versteht. Die Zauberin begann darauf, mir aus dem brodelnden Topfe die verschiedensten Dinge über meine Vergangenheit, Gegenwart und Zukunft und Gott weiß was alles zu sagen. Als sie geendet, erklärte ich, es sei Alles falsch und in Europa verstehe man die Zauberei besser. Neugierig bat mich das Weib, ihr dies zu zeigen. Ich sagte ihr, wir gebrauchten dazu keinen Topf, auch werde sie eine deutliche Stimme hören und den Zauber fühlen, nahm dann meinen Stock, focht damit unter lautem Murmeln in der Luft herum und zählte ihr endlich einige tüchtige Hiebe auf. Schreiend und schimpfend lief sie zum Hause hinaus und ich warf den Zaubertopf hinterdrein. Die Leute, in deren Hause dies geschah, waren von Angst ergriffen und wagten es nicht, den Topf anzu-

faſſen oder den Platz zu betreten wo er lag; ich ſelbſt mußte die Scherben wegräumen, um ihnen zu zeigen, daß nichts zu fürchten ſei. Als man dies einſah und nach drei Tagen keine üble Folgen entſtanden waren, verſprach man mir, den Glauben an alle Hexerei fahren zu laſſen, mit dem man ihnen fortwährend Geld auspreſſe.

Eine Tagereiſe weſtlich von Tunis liegt die Stadt Bunſard am Meere; es wohnen dort gegen 150 jüdiſche Familien, unter denen eine große Anzahl italieniſche Juden ſind. Sie haben eine Synagoge, und ihr Chacham heißt Rabbi Salomo. Sie treiben blühenden Handel und die Geſchäftsleute unter ihnen ſind ſehr reich, dabei ſind ſie gut unterrichtet. Es befindet ſich in der Stadt eine bedeutende vom Bai errichtete Fiſcherei, und der Ertrag derſelben (geſalzene und getrocknete Fiſche, wie auch Thran) bildet einen Hauptgegenſtand des Exporthandels.

Die Araber der Stadt gehören theilweiſe zu einer beſonderen Secte, welche Ouſawi genannt werden und ſich unter ſich wieder in mehre Geſellſchaften ſcheiden, von denen eine jede ein beliebiges Thier als Symbol hat und ſich nach dieſem benennt; ſo giebt es Ouſawi vom Löwen, Bären, Kameel und Strauß. Die Anhänger dieſer Secte geleiten die nach Mekka ausziehenden und von dort zurückkehrenden Pilger aus und in die Stadt, was ſtets mit großer Feierlichkeit, Muſik und Gepränge geſchieht. Bei dieſen feierlichen Aufzügen gerathen die Ouſawi in einen ſolchen religiöſen Fanatismus, daß ſie geiſtig ganz abweſend ſind. Sie gebehrden ſich dann wie die wilden Thiere, welche ſie zum Symbol gewählt haben, ſie brüllen wie der Löwe, brummen wie der Bär, und man hat mir verſichert, daß ſie auch in derſelben thieriſchen Weiſe ihre Nahrung zu ſich nehmen, ſo daß die Löwen- und Bären-Ouſawi rohes Fleiſch eſſen, auch lebendige Hühner zerreißen und verſchlingen, während die Ouſawi vom Strauß Steine und Glas verſchlucken, ſo daß ihnen das Blut aus dem Munde quillt, indeß die vom Kameel Diſteln und Dornen verzehren. Ihre thieriſche Wildheit geht in dieſem Zuſtande ſo weit, daß man ſie an Ketten

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und der Rabbi Abraham aus Beja.[1] Sie überbrachten 1487 dem Ritter Briefe von ſeinem Könige. Joſeph, welcher früher in Bagdad geweſen und Alles, was er dort über Ormuz, den weltberühmten Stapelplatz der Spezereien und Reichthümer Indiens gehört, nach ſeiner Rückkehr dem Monarchen erzählt hatte, war von dieſem beauftragt, in Begleitung des genannten Rabbi Abraham den irrenden Cavilhão aufzuſuchen und ihm die Weiſung zu bringen, durch Joſeph Nachrichten von dem Erfolge ſeiner Sendung zu geben, ſelbſt aber mit Abraham nach Ormuz zu

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ejus filium, vel generum in bello, sint Nobiles.“ Jahrhunderte hindurch hat man die Verſammlung für ſtattgefunden und die darauf gefaßten Beſchlüſſe natürlich für echt gehalten. Erſt der gelehrte Schatzmeiſter Antonio do Carmo Velho de Barboza hat in ſeinem „Exame critico das Cortes de Lamego“ (Porto 1845) in ſchlagender Weiſe nachgewieſen, daß dieſe Cortes gar nicht exiſtirten und auch das in drei verſchiedenen Documenten aufbewahrte Libro de Cortes fingirt und untergeſchoben, auch erſt im 17. Jahrhundert, vielleicht zu gleicher Zeit mit einigen ſpaniſchen Judenbriefen verfaßt worden iſt. Es ſteht hiſtoriſch feſt, und hat Barboza hervorzuheben vergeſſen, daß die Stellung der Juden in der Zeit, in welche die Cortes zu Lamego geſetzt wurden, nicht der Art geweſen ſei, daß man den angezogenen Paſſus gegen ſie hätte erlaſſen ſollen. Dieſer Paſſus wurde eingeſchoben, um uralt zu ſcheinen, denn der Fabrikant konnte ſich nicht denken, daß den Juden, in ſeinem Jahrhundert verwieſen und verbrannt, in Portugal auch einſt ein glücklicherer Stern geleuchtet habe.

[1] Barros, Mariz, Faria u. A. nennen ihn Abraham de Beja, Castanhed: Morador em Beja. Schäfer l. c. III, 155, nennt ihn ſchlechtweg Rabbi Abraham.

Barros, Asia (Lisboa 1778) Dec. 1. Lib. 3. C. 5: E estando pera se vir a este Reyno com recado destas cousas que tinha sabido, soube que andavam alli dous Judeos de Hespanha em sua busca, com os quaes se vio mui secretamente, a hum chamauam *Rabi Habrão, natural de Béja* — Castanhed: *Morador em Béja* — e a outro *Josepe, capateiro de Lamego*; o qual Josepe havia pouco tempo que viera daquellas partes; e como soube ça no Reyno o grande desejo que el Rey tinha da informação das cousas da India, foi-lho dar conta como estivera em a cidade de Babylonia, a que ora chamam Bagodad, situada no rio Eufrates, e que alli ouvira fallar do trato da Ilcha chamada Ormuz, que estava na boca da mar da Persia, em a qual havia huma Cidade a mais celebre de todas aquellas partes, por a elle concorrerem todalas especiarias e riquezas da India, as

Capitel XI.

IV. Algerien.

Als ich in Bona einzog, war es mir etwa so, als ob ich nach einem Aufenthalt in der Hölle, in den Himmel gekommen wäre. Es war der Anblick einer europäisch gebauten Stadt, der Anblick von civilisirten Menschen, der mich förmlich erquickte. Nur eine große Unannehmlichkeit haben dort die Europäer zu bestehen: es ist das Fieber, das unter denselben, wenn auch nicht gefährlich grassirt.

Es wohnen in der Stadt etwa 150 jüdische Familien, deren Chacham, ein Marokkaner, sehr wenig unterrichtet ist. Die Gemeinde hat eine sehr große alterthümliche Synagoge, Grebe genannt, in welcher an der nördlichen Seitenwand die Stelle der Bundeslade durch ein kleines Zimmer gebildet wird, zu welchem man einige Stufen hinabsteigt; dort stehen die Pentateuche. Dies kleine Zimmer steht in ganz besonderem Rufe der Heiligkeit, und eines Tages bemerkte ich, daß mehre muselmanische Frauen in dasselbe eintraten, sich eine Zeitlang auf den Boden setzten und nachdem sie ein Geschenk gegeben hatten, sich wieder entfernten. Ich fragte nach der Ursache, da es mir sonderbar vorkam, daß muselmanische Frauen eine Synagoge in solcher Art besuchten, und es wurde mir darauf folgende Geschichte mitgetheilt. Vor mehren hundert Jahren sei einmal mit einer sehr stürmischen Meeresfluth ein Brett nahe ans Land getrieben, und als einige Muselmanen dasselbe hätten herausfischen wollen, sei es zurück geschwommen, ebenso sei dies geschehen, als einige Christen das Brett hätten herausziehen wollen; als jedoch einige Juden gekommen seien, um dasselbe zu versuchen, sei das Brett ans Land getrieben worden und liegen geblieben. Auf diesem Brette sei ein Pentateuch befestigt gewesen und man habe ihn in die Synagoge

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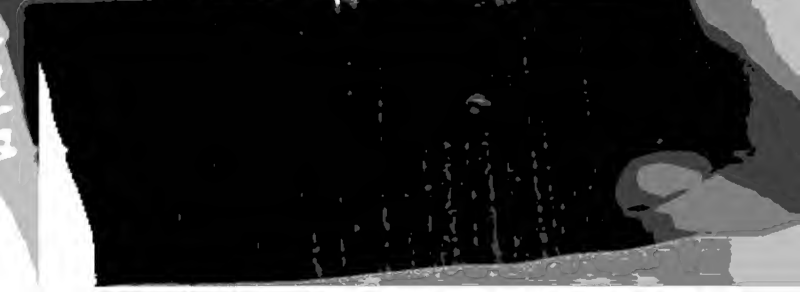
getragen und dort aufgestellt. Nach diesem Wunder nun sei der Glaube an die Heiligkeit dieses Zimmers, wo der Pentateuch aufbewahrt worden, entstanden, und wenn irgend eine Frau, muselmanische und sogar christliche, nicht wohl sei, so komme sie andächtig hierher, bete und mache Geschenke, um zu genesen. — Ich erklärte meinen Unglauben in Betreff der wunderthätigen Heiligkeit und deutete die Geschichte mit dem Herausfischen des Brettes und Pentateuchs aus dem Meere ganz einfach, wenn sie überhaupt wahr sei, dahin, daß vielleicht ein Jude Schiffbruch gelitten und den Pentateuch, damit er nicht verloren gehe, auf das Brett gebunden habe; daß aber gerade Juden ihn herausgezogen, während Christen und Muselmanen dies nicht vermocht hatten, erklärte ich entweder für einen Zufall, oder aber es sei während der Zeit das Meer ruhiger geworden. Nach einer solchen Deduction hielt und schalt man mich für einen Ungläubigen.

Die Strecke von Bona nach Constantine kann man zu Pferde in drei Tagen zurücklegen. Ich fuhr mit einem Dampfer nach Philippeville und von dort in zwölf Stunden mit einem Omnibus nach Constantine.

Die Stadt Constantine liegt auf der Spitze eines Berges, ist mit starken Mauern umgeben und eine bedeutende Festung. Außerhalb der Mauern zieht sich ein gegen 200 Fuß tiefer und 40 Fuß breiter natürlicher Graben um die Stadt, und in weiterer Entfernung dehnt sich ein Gebirgsgürtel um dieselbe. Im oberen Stadttheile wohnen die Europäer, und dort befinden sich auch die Geschäfte, während in dem unteren Theile die Afrikaner wohnen, auch die Juden wohnen meistentheils in dem letzteren. Es befinden sich etwa 1000 jüdische Familien in der Stadt, welche drei Synagogen besitzen. Der Gemeinde steht ein von der französischen Regierung angestellter Oberrabbiner, Rabbi Ephraim Netter, vor, nebst einem eingebornen Chacham, Rabbi Isaak Tuwiana. Der Präsident der Gemeinde ist Rabbi Salomo Narboni; er ist ein Abkömmling der vertriebenen spanischen Judenfamilien, etwa 70 Jahr alt und sehr reich. Der Handel, welchen die Juden mit den umliegenden arabischen Städten und Dörfern treiben, ist sehr bedeutend und sie selbst zum größten Theil reich.

Unter den Eingebornen, Juden sowohl wie Muselmanen und



Christen, herrscht ebenfalls noch ein abergläubischer Gebrauch bei Krankheiten. Man glaubt auch hier, wenn Jemand krank wird, er werde von einem bösen Geiste verfolgt. Um diesen zu versöhnen und zu bannen, schlachtet man ein schwarzes Huhn, bestreicht mit dem Blute desselben die Brust, den Scheitel, die Augenbrauen und Hände des Kranken, dann wird das Huhn zubereitet und darauf außerhalb der Stadt in einen beliebigen Brunnen geworfen, als Gabe für den bösen Geist. Der Kranke muß darauf sicher wieder genesen, wie man fest glaubt.

Südöstlich von Constantine, in einer Entfernung von zwei Tagereisen liegt Batna, eine Tagereise weiter Biskera, anderthalb Tage weiter liegt Cidagua und einen Tag von dort ist Ginge. Bei dem letzteren Ort ist die Grenze von Algerien und Tunis, und von dort kommt man nach Jsrit. Es wohnen in diesen Orten kleine Judengemeinden, von denen jedoch nichts Bemerkenswerthes zu berichten ist.

Anderthalb Tagereisen nordwestlich von Constantine liegt die seit kurzem gegründete Stadt Setif, wo sich etwa hundert jüdische Familien niedergelassen haben, die aus Kabylien hierher gezogen sind. Ihr Präses ist David, ein Schwiegersohn von Narboni in Constantine, der zweite Vorsteher ist Eliahu Mammi, bei welchem ich wohnte. Die kleine Gemeinde hat sich eine schöne neue Synagoge gebaut; im Allgemeinen aber sind sie selbst sehr unwissend und leben nach ihren in Kabylien angenommenen Sitten. Ihre Häuser sind zwar in europäischer Weise gebaut, jedoch im Innern mehr den Zelten ähnlich, in welchen sie unter den Kabylen gewohnt haben. Sie kleiden sich sehr einfach, indem sie ein langes, bis auf die Knöchel herabreichendes Gewand tragen, über welches sie einen Burnus hängen; den Kopf bedecken sie mit einem Fez, auf dem sich ein kleiner Turban befindet. Eben so einfach tragen sich die Frauen. Für den Unterricht der Kinder wird in neuerer Zeit gesorgt.

Nicht weit von Setif beginnt das Land der Kabylen. Auf meine Nachfrage bei den Juden von Setif, ob es unter den Kabylenstämmen viele Glaubensgenossen gebe, wurde mir eine bejahende Versicherung gegeben. Es befindet sich ihrer Aussage nach ein bedeutender jüdischer Stamm in Kabylien, welchen die

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Araber Beni-Muſſa (Kinder Moſes) nennen, große und tapfere Krieger. — Sollten dies nicht die Bene-Moſche ſein, von denen meine Glaubensgenoſſen ſprechen? — Auch wurde mir mitgetheilt, daß es dort einen Araberſtamm gebe, mit Namen Emare, den die übrigen Muhamedaner Chums nennen. Sie bekennen ſich zum Muhamedanismus und werden, wie man mir erzählte, deshalb Chums (Fünf) genannt, weil ſie, nachdem ſie ſich vor dem Gottesdienſte den Vorſchriften gemäß gewaſchen haben, mit den zuſammengefaßten fünf Fingern irgend ein unanſtändiges Zeichen machen, weshalb ſie von den übrigen Muhamedanern verachtet und gehaßt werden. Der Stamm der Chumsaraber iſt ſehr gaſtfreundlich und wenn ein Reiſender zu ihnen kommt, ſo wird er freundlich bei irgend einem von ihnen beherbergt, ja man bringt ihm ſogar aus der Klaſſe der Wittwen des Stammes eine Geſellſchafterin.

Zwei Tagereiſen von Setif liegt die Stadt Bu-Sada, drei Tagereiſen in ſüdlicher Richtung liegt Luguard, das im Jahre 1852 die Franzoſen eroberten, bei welcher Gelegenheit ſehr viele Juden, die unter den arabiſchen Kriegern waren, umkamen. Acht Tage ſüdlich von letzterem Orte liegt Beni-Mezab, deſſen arabiſche Bewohner einen unabhängigen Stamm bilden, welcher den perſiſchen Religionsſtifter Ali als Propheten verehrt. Es wohnt eine ziemlich ſtarke Judenfamilie in der Stadt, welche jedoch ſehr bedrückt wird. Ich ſprach mit einigen Arabern aus Beni-Mezab, welche mir mittheilten, daß die bei ihnen wohnenden Juden zum größten Theil Profeſſioniſten, nur wenige Handelsleute ſeien.

Bei dieſer Stadt beginnt die große Wüſte, Sahara genannt. Zwanzig Tagereiſen durch die Wüſte führen nach Sudan, in der Mitte von Timbuctu; man trifft auf der Hälfte des Weges dorthin nur einen Marktflecken. Karawanen ziehen nur ſelten dahin, und wenn es doch eine wagt, ſo geht ſie gewöhnlich dem Verderben entgegen.

Ich hatte mir die Reiſe nach Timbuctu vorgenommen, wurde aber durch meine geringen Mittel an deren Ausführung verhindert.

Ich reiste von Setif nach Bugia (arabiſch Buſaje), wozu

ich zu Pferde drittehalb Tagereisen durch große Wüsteneien und Gebirge gebrauchte. Von dort schiffte ich mich mit dem Dampfboote nach dem eine Tagereise entfernten Algier ein.

Es war im März 1854, als ich in Algier anlangte. Die Stadt und der Hafen sind genugsam bekannt und beschrieben, ebenso der bedeutende Handels- und Geschäftsverkehr, der sich dort entwickelt hat, so daß ich nicht nöthig habe, darüber zu sprechen. Es wohnen dort ungefähr tausend jüdische Familien. Der von der französischen Regierung angestellte Oberrabbiner heißt A. M. Weill. Er ist oberster Vorsteher der sämmtlichen Juden in Algerien, ein sehr unterrichteter und wohlthätiger Mann. Der Gemeindesecretär heißt R. Simon, ein Europäer und ebenfalls sehr gebildet. Der zweite Oberrabbiner ist Rabbi Jacob Smasi, ein Afrikaner; Dajanim sind Rabbi Sadia Amur, Rabbi David Mati, dessen Bruder Saul Mati und Rabbi Salomo Delila; alle sind wohl unterrichtet im Talmud und im Codex. Die Gemeinde besitzt zwei große und zehn kleine Synagogen. — Für den Schulunterricht der Kinder im Hebräischen und Französischen ist große Sorgfalt getragen.

Ich hielt mich in der Stadt gegen sechs Monate auf und gab dort meine beiden Werke: „Une année de sejour aux Indes orientales“ (Gedruckt bei Dubos frères) und „Nesiad Israel“ (Gedruckt bei Chaim Cohen Schulal) heraus. Während meines Aufenthalts fand ich gastfreundliche Aufnahme bei Isaak Stora, einem sehr reichen Manufacturisten, der ein Nachkomme der aus Spanien vertriebenen Juden ist; er hat seinen Namen nach dem früheren Wohnsitze seiner Eltern, Stora (bei Sligada) angenommen. Auf dem alten Begräbnißplatze der Gemeinde findet man die beiden Gräber zweier berühmten Rabbinen, des Rabbi Isaac bar Schescheth, Verfasser von Riwas, und Simon ben Chemach, Verfasser von Taschbaz. Die Familie des Letzteren wird von den eingebornen Juden Duran genannt.

Die Häuser der Juden sind in europäischem Style gebaut sehr freundlich und sauber. Ihre Lebensweise ist bei einigen nach europäischer, bei anderen nach afrikanischer Sitte. Die Männer kleiden sich nach der Tracht von Tunis und viele der jüngeren tragen europäische Kleidung. Die Mädchen und Frauen tragen

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einen langen seidenen Rock ohne Aermel, über der Brust mit Goldstickereien geziert. Erstere bedecken den Kopf mit einem spitz zulaufenden Käppchen, welches mit goldenen Medaillen benäht ist und an dessen Spitze ein Gold- oder Seidenquast hängt; die Frauen tragen einen Fez, der bei vielen mit Gold und Perlen umwunden ist, bei anderen nur mit einem Seidentuche; die Haare hängen in einem langen Zopfe herab, der mit einem blauen Bande umwickelt ist.

Auch unter den Eingebornen dieser Stadt herrscht der Aberglaube an Teufelsspuk, Hexereien und Beschwörungen. Bei Krankheitsfällen gehen sie mit einem arabischen Zauberweibe zu einer bei der Stadt sprudelnden Quelle, schlachten dort unter Beschwörungsformeln ein schwarzes Huhn, indem sie demselben mit einer goldenen Münze die Gurgel abschneiden, und mit dessen Blute den Kranken an Brust, Stirn u. s. w. bestreichen. Darauf zündet die Beschwörerin ein Feuer an, wirft verschiedenes Rauchwerk hinein, und besprengt dasselbe sowie den Kranken mit dem Blute des geschlachteten Huhnes. Nach dieser Ceremonie soll dann der Kranke genesen. Man nimmt diese Beschwörungen nur Mittwochs von Morgens 8 Uhr an bis Mittag vor. Ich ging selbst einmal nach dem dazu bestimmten Platze hinaus und fand über zweihundert Männer und Frauen mit diesen Beschwörungen beschäftigt. Die jüdischen Frauen lassen das Huhn zu diesem Zwecke vom Schächter schlachten und nehmen das Blut in einem Glase mit. Man nennt diese Ceremonien Bchor.

Sechs Stunden von Algier liegt die Stadt Blidah, wohin man auf einem Omnibus fahren kann. Es wohnen dort hundert jüdische Familien, welche zwei Synagogen, jedoch keinen Chacham besitzen. Auffällig war es mir, daß die Juden in dieser Stadt das hebräische Kuph (hartes K) nicht aussprechen können, sie sprechen es wie uph aus. Sie leben zum größten Theil auf afrikanische Weise, sind meist sehr reich und treiben blühenden Handel.

Acht Stunden per Omnibus führen von Blidah nach Medeah, wo dreihundert jüdische Familien wohnen. Sie besitzen vier Synagogen und einen Chacham, Namens Rabbi Jeschua, der sich mit der Kabbala beschäftigt und ganz weiße Gewänder

trägt, jedoch ziemlich im Talmud bewandert ist. Er hat zwei Frauen. — Ich logirte in der Stadt bei dem Kaufmanne Rabbi Mosche Ajes, einem sehr reichen Manne.

Nach anderthalb Tagereisen zu Pferde gelangte ich nach Milianah. Dort wohnen gegen vierhundert jüdische Familien, welche drei Synagogen und einen Chacham, Rabbi Jacob aus Marokko, besitzen. Die Stadt liegt auf dem Gipfel eines hohen Berges und ist rings von einer starken Gebirgskette umzogen, der bedeutendsten, die in Algerien ist. Die Bergluft ist äußerst frisch und gesund, auch hat die Stadt reichlich frisches gutes Wasser. Obwohl die Häuser im europäischen Stile gebaut sind, so ist doch ihre innere Einrichtung sowie das Leben der Bewohner ganz und gar der Sitte der Eingebornen gemäß.

Ein weiterer Ritt durch die Gebirge führte mich nach Rittelchad. Die Stadt liegt in einem schönen Thale, sie ist noch im Entstehen begriffen und die Franzosen bauen dort eine Festung. Es wohnen etwa zwanzig jüdische Familien ohne Chacham daselbst, doch besitzen sie eine kleine Synagoge; ihre Lebensweise und Wohnungen sind ganz afrikanisch.

Anderthalb Tage weiter (zu Pferde) brachten mich nach Tijerad. Diese Stadt liegt auf einem kleinen Hügel und ist wie die vorige im Bau begriffen. Auch hier legen die Franzosen Befestigungen an. Die jüdische Gemeinde ist hundert Familien stark, sie hat eine Synagoge und einen Chacham, Rabbi Abraham, welcher aus Oran stammt und bei dem ich logirte. Die Juden haben sich von Kabylien aus hier angesiedelt und sind wie die von Setif ihren früheren Sitten und Gewohnheiten treu geblieben. Auch hier herrscht, wie in den anderen Städten, der Aberglaube. Wenn Jemand krank wird, so schlachten sie ein Huhn, bereiten daraus eine Speise, welche Kuskus genannt wird, und verzehren diese bei einer kleinen Gasterei, wozu Bekannte geladen werden. Die Ueberbleibsel sammt den Federn des Huhnes werden dann in einen Brunnen geworfen und man glaubt damit ein sicheres Zaubermittel gegen die Krankheit angewandt zu haben. — Ein anderes Zaubermittel gegen Krankheiten, welches vielfach angewandt wird, ist folgendes. Sie nehmen eine Flasche oder Krug mit Oel, gehen zur Nachtzeit, damit Niemand etwas davon sehen

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als 5000 machte er nieder, ohne daß er einen einzigen Mann verlor. Ceuta wurde entſetzt und ehe noch der Morgen graute, zog ſich der Kariſe nach Fez zurück.[1] Mit gleicher Tapferkeit, mit bewundernswürdiger Kühnheit und ſeltenem Geſchick brachte Al-Valenſi den vor Safi lagernden Feind zum Weichen und hob die Belagerung auf.[2]

Azamor wird als der ſpätere Wohnort dieſes tapfern jüdiſchen Helden angegeben; nach Azamor wollen wir die portugieſiſchen Eroberer begleiten.

Sie war, nur wenige Meilen von Fez entfernt, nächſt Safi die vornehmſte Stadt der Provinz Duccala. Lange vor der Einnahme von Safi durch die Portugieſen hielt König Manuel, um die Freundſchaft und den Frieden, welchen João mit den Mauren von Azamor geſchloſſen hatte, fortzuſetzen, einige vertraute Portugieſen in dieſer Stadt. Auf ihren Betrieb und mit Beihülfe eines

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[1] Tambien merea ser celebrada la fidelidad y valor de un noble Israelita, llamado Semuel Alualensi, de los desterrados de Espana: el qual, auiendo passado à Africa fue fauorecido y muy muz amado del Rey de Fez, que en aquel tiempo era de la familia de los Merines. Succedio que los Xarifes se lleuantaron contra los Merines, y los mataron y despojaron del Reyne. Fue tan grande el dolor del grato y fiel Semuel Alualensi, que poniendo su vida, hazienda, y todas sus cosas à manifiesto peligro, se junto con otros Alcaydes criados de los Merines, y armaron algunos nauios, tomando por Capitan al valeroso Alualensi, para hir contra los Xarifes, que estauan en aquel tiempo sobre la fortaleza de Cepta, y tenian muy afligidos à los Portuguezes vasallos del Rey D. Manuel que la defendian. Llegaron entonces los nauios de nuestro Alualensi al puerto de Cepta, y auiendo desembarcado la gente en tierra, espero tiempo oportuno de la noche, y con quatocientos Nombres deo sobre el ezercito del Xarife, que eran mas de treynta mil, y mataron mas de cinco mil dellos, sin perder uno solo de los suyos. Luego al otro dia als(z)o el Xarife el cerco y se retiro a Fez. Aboab, Nomologia (Amsterdam 1629) 305 f.

[2] El Tirano Xarife de Marruecos cerco à la ciudad de Safi en el anno de 1539 con cien mil hombres y el valiente Samuel Valenciano, Judio de Azamor, y Almirante de guerreros Vergantines, que formo à su costa, socorrio à los cercados Portuguezes, y con admirable industria, y audacia desbarato à los Mahometanos y descerco a la Ciudad. Barrios, Historia Universal Judayca, 8 f.

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und zwar in ſolcher Haſt, daß über 80 in den Thoren erdrückt wurden.

Ehe noch der Tag anbrach, ließ ſich von der Mauer des in Todesſtille verſunkenen Azamor eine Stimme vernehmen. Diego Berrio! Diego Berrio! Dem tapferſten Mann der portugieſiſchen Flotte galt dieſer Ruf. Es war die Stimme eines Freundes, eines alten Bekannten aus der Heimath, es war der Ruf des aus dem Vaterlande verjagten Juden Jacob Adibe. Ohne Verzug wollte Jacob zum Herzog geführt werden. Diego Berrio geleitete den Freund. Die Stadt iſt frei! Mit dieſen Worten fiel Jacob auf ſein Geſicht. Azamor iſt geräumt, o Herzog; Azamor iſt frei! Ich flehe um mein Leben und um das Leben meiner Brüder und Glaubensgenoſſen! D. Jaime hob den Juden auf, verſprach ihm Schutz und Erhaltung; er ſelbſt ſank nieder und dankte Gott für die Gnade, daß er ihn dieſe große und treffliche Stadt habe einnehmen laſſen, ohne Verluſt Derer, die mit ihm gezogen waren. Jacob Adibe hatte das Wort des Herzogs und kehrte freudig zu den Seinen zurück. Im portugieſiſchen Lager erhob man ein Siegesgeſchrei; mit entfalteten Fahnen zogen die Eroberer in Azamor ein und bald wehten portugieſiſche Banner von den goldenen Kuppeln der zahlreichen Moſcheen. Bewaffnete Mannſchaft wurde zum Schutz der Juden geſtellt,[1] und während das erſte Hochamt in der mauriſchen Stadt gehalten wurde, zogen die Juden ſammt ihrem

[1] Damião de Goes, l. c. 372: Despyada assi a cidade, sendo ainda noite, hum Judeu de naçam Portuguez, per nome Jacob Adibe, dos que se foram deste regno, que ahi era morador, chamou derriba do muro Diogo Berrio ete O Duque fez alcuantar o Judeu . . . . . e ao Judeo concedeo o que lhe pedio etc. . . Entrassem na cidade e com elle o corregedor pera defender os Judeus que os nam roubassem . . . . Osorius, l. c. 254 b: Antiquam dilusesceret Judaeus quidam, nomine Jacobus Adibius, natione Lusitanus, qui cum reliquis Judaeis in exilium pulsus fuerat, e muris Jacobum (muß heißen Diegum) Berrium etc. Auch Barrios erwähnt des Jacob Adibe (Historia Universal Judayca 13): Jacob Adibe, en Azamor ciudad de Africa dio las alegres nuevas de como la havian desamparado sus temenosos Moradores a Don Jaime Duque de Bragança, sobrino del Rey D. Manuel.

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Spanier (Christen) hier heimisch gemacht, da man in acht Stunden nach Spanien hinüberfahren kann. Man spricht in der Stadt Arabisch, Französisch und Spanisch. Von Algier kommt alle fünf Tage und von Marseille alle zehn Tage ein Dampfschiff nach Oran, von denen das letztere nach Gibraltar weiter geht.

Mit dem Omnibus gelangt man in zwölf Stunden nach Tlemsan. Dort wohnen 500 jüdische Familien, die drei Synagogen besitzen. Die Dajanim sind: Rabbi Mirod und Rabbi Samuel; der Vorsteher ist Rabbi Jacob, der zweite Vorsteher Maimon Serbeth. Auf dem jüdischen Begräbnißplatze liegt der Rabbi Ephraim Alluncava, welcher mit einer Anzahl aus Spanien vertriebener Juden hierherkam; da ihnen jedoch in der Stadt die Aufnahme verweigert wurde, so siedelten sie sich außerhalb derselben an. Rabbi Ephraim war ein sehr geschickter Arzt, der durch seine Kenntnisse und seine Uneigennützigkeit seinen mit ihm vertriebenen Brüdern die Aufnahme und Niederlassung in der Stadt erwarb. Als nämlich die Tochter des Kaid schwer erkrankt war, und alle Aerzte sie aufgaben, meldete er sich bei dem betrübten Vater zu einem letzten Versuche und stellte in zehn Tagen die Kranke wieder her. Als einzige Belohnung dafür erbat er sich vom Kaid die Erlaubniß für seine Brüder, in der Stadt wohnen zu dürfen, was denn auch genehmigt wurde. Ich ging auf den Begräbnißplatz, um auf dem Leichensteine das Datum seines Todes aufzusuchen; die Inschrift war zwar sehr verwischt, aber ich fand doch folgendes heraus: „Bisnat Rb. Niftar Rb.“ d. h. im Jahre 5202 bibl. Zeitrechnung (1442) ist der Rabbi gestorben. Im Schem Hagdolim (Wilna 1853) Fol. 16 fand ich einen Ausspruch über ihn, welcher folgendermaßen lautet: „Rabbi Ephraim Alluncava war ein großer Rabbi in der Stadt Tlemsan in Algerien und Verfasser des Werkes Schaar Kewod Adonai.“ Die Juden der Stadt und Gegend verehren das Grab des Rabbi und pilgern dorthin, wozu sie sich Speisen mitnehmen und theilweise nach gehaltenem Gebete am Grabe verzehren, die Reste aber zu Hause an die Familie vertheilen, welchen Gebrauch man Said debe Raw, Mahlzeit des Rabbi nennt. Einige nehmen auch Erde vom Grabe mit, welche um den Hals getragen ihrem Glauben nach bei allen Leibeskrankheiten helfen soll. Das Haus und die Synagoge des

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Rabbi Ephraim sind noch erhalten und dort versammeln sich jährlich die Juden zu frommen Gebeten und nachherigem Gastmahle.

Die Stadt hat eine sehr gesunde Lage und treibt blühenden Handel. In den umliegenden Gebirgen wohnen unter den Arabern ebenfalls Juden, welche ich nicht besucht habe. In Tlemsan logirte ich bei dem Kaufmann Moses Serbeth, einem reichen Manufacturisten, der eine tüchtige Bibliothek besitzt.

Eine Tagereise von dort liegt die Stadt Madroma, von Arabern bewohnt und sehr schmutzig. Die jüdische Gemeinde, welche eine Synagoge und einen Schächter besitzt, ist fünfzig Familien stark; sie sind zwar sehr reich, aber unwissend und leben nach den Sitten der Kabylen.

Sechs Stunden weiter liegt die Stadt Ghazuwat, von den Franzosen Nimur genannt. Dort legen die von Algier kommenden Schiffe, die nach Gibraltar gehen, an und nehmen Frachten auf. Es wohnen fünfzig jüdische Familien in der Stadt, die eine kleine Synagoge haben; ihr Schächter heißt Rabbi Mosche Levy Askanasi, von Geburt ein Pole, der eine Frau aus Oran aus der Familie Tuwel geheirathet hat. Die Juden treiben blühenden Handel, sind meist sehr reich und leben zum großen Theil nach europäischen Sitten.

Von dort kehrte ich nach Tlemsan zurück, um mich nach Marokko zu begeben. Etwa anderthalb Tagereisen von Tlemsan liegt Magnia, wo die Gebiete von Algerien und Marokko zusammenstoßen. Nicht weit von diesem Orte befindet sich auf algerischem Gebiete ein Silberbergwerk, welches sehr stark betrieben wird und reiche Ausbeute liefert.

Im Allgemeinen kann man ohne Bedenken behaupten, daß die Juden in Algerien unter der französischen Regierung in glücklicher Lage leben. Sie haben an den meisten Orten Chachamim und Lehrer, die von der Regierung angestellt und besoldet werden, und der Unterricht der Jugend wird gut geleitet. Das jüngere Geschlecht ist mit der französischen Regierung sehr zufrieden, die Aelteren jedoch, mit denen ich über diesen Gegenstand sprach, behaupten, daß seit der französischen Besitznahme des Landes die Religiösität abnehme und daß die geschäftlichen Beziehungen nicht so einträglich seien, wie unter der Herrschaft der Araber. Ich ent-

gegnete ihnen darauf mit dem Spruche Salomo's, daß es besser sei, ein Stückchen Brod in Frieden und Ruhe zu essen, als den Ueberfluß in Angst und Unruhe zu besitzen,[1] daß es also sich besser leben lasse unter der geregelten und gesitteten Regierung Frankreichs, als unter dem Druck und Fanatismus der Araber.

Capitel 42.

V. Marokko.

Wenn man von Algerien nach Marokko kommt, so empfindet man im umgekehrten Verhältnisse, nur in noch größerem Maße dasselbe, was ich bei meinem Eintritte von Tunis nach Algerien sagte: Man kommt aus dem Paradies in die Wüste, und sobald man den Fuß aus dem Gebiete des civilisirten Algerien über die marokkanische Grenze gesetzt hat, beginnen Gefahren aller Art.

Von Magnia, der französischen Grenzstadt, kommt man durch eine Wüste nach Ushda. Die Entfernung beider Orte beträgt etwa sechs Stunden. Südlich von Ushda liegen die Gebirge Bene Isnaz, von Räubern und Banditen bewohnt, die nicht allein die durch die Gegend ziehenden Karawanen plündern, sondern sogar oftmals die Stadt Ushda überfallen und brandschatzen. — Von dem ungeheuren Schmutze, der in dieser Stadt herrscht, vermag sich ein Europäer kaum einen Begriff zu machen; im Uebrigen ist die Stadt sehr groß und von Gärten umringt. Es wohnen etwa 70—80 jüdische Familien daselbst, welche zwei Chachamim und eine Synagoge besitzen; letztere aber ist im kläglichsten Zustande, was jedoch bei der Lage der Dinge sehr zu entschuldigen ist, da die Araber im andern Falle sie berauben und zerstören

[1] Sprüche Salomonis Cap. 17, V. 1.

würden. Der Nassi der kleinen Gemeinde ist Isaac Sarbeth, ein sehr reicher Mann. Um einen Begriff von der Unterdrückung der Juden zu geben, will ich die Wohnung dieses reichen Mannes schildern. In einem Hofe von einer Mauer umgeben lag ein kleines schmutziges Häuschen, zwar mit einer Thür versehen, aber ohne alle Fenster nach Außen. Im Innern waren mehre Gemächer, jedoch allesammt finster und schmucklos; kein Bett, kein Stuhl und kein Hausgeräth war zu finden, man behalf sich mit einer Matratze aus Palmblättern. Auf meine Frage nach dem Grunde dieses unangenehmen und armseligen Aufenthalts theilte mir der Besitzer mit, daß er aus Furcht vor Plünderung es nicht wagen dürfe, sich besser einzurichten. — Wenn ein Araber ins Haus kommt, so müssen die Juden so demüthig mit ihm sprechen, wie mit einem Fürsten; wenn er etwas mitnimmt, was ihm gefällt, so darf man nicht murren; denn im anderen Falle würde er sofort sein Messer ziehen, und es ist kein Richter und kein Gesetz da zum Schutze der Bedrückten und Beraubten.

Ich sah gleich beim Eintritt in das Land, daß eine Bereisung desselben nicht ohne große Gefahren sein könne und werde; da ich mir indeß vorgenommen hatte, dasselbe kennen zu lernen, so schloß ich mich, in die Landestracht gekleidet, einer Karawane an und machte eine 25-tägige Reise ins Innere über Temessuin, Teza, Fez, Tetuan nach Gibraltar, von wo ich nach Algier zurückkehrte. Obgleich ich mit der Landessprache und den Sitten der Bewohner gut bekannt war, so vermag ich doch kaum zu schildern, mit welchen Mühsalen und Gefährlichkeiten diese Reise verknüpft war. Jude und Christ sind keinen Augenblick ihres Lebens sicher. Bei der geringsten Veranlassung, die man zu provociren sucht, wird der Fremde sogar von der Obrigkeit gebrandschatzt und gemißhandelt, da falsche Anklagen und Zeugenbeweise ohne Suchen zu finden sind, und nicht allein in Religionssachen, sondern bei irgend einem erdachten oder fingirten Anlasse wird ohne Recht und Gerechtigkeit mit Willkür über Leben und Eigenthum Andersglaubender verfügt.

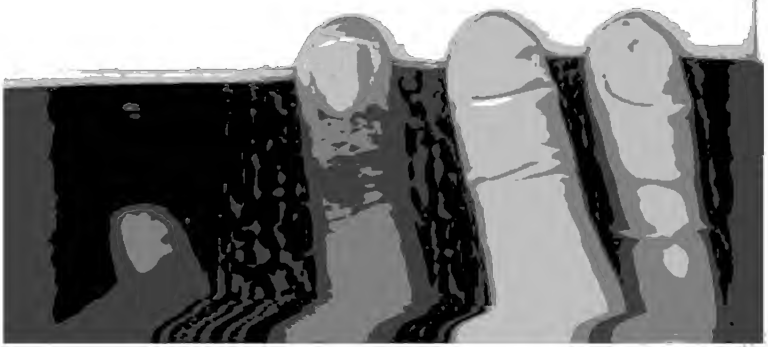
Ich theile als einen Beleg dafür hier die Geschichte eines unglücklichen Judenmädchens mit, die zugleich ein Zeichen sein möge dafür, daß unter den Töchtern eines vertriebenen und ge-

knechteten Volkes Frauenseelen, die würdig sind denen der alten Heldenzeit unserer Vorfahren, einer Hulda und Deborah, an die Seite gestellt zu werden, noch nicht ausgestorben sind. Sie möge auch ein Zeugniß sein von der Frömmigkeit der marokkanischen Juden, und den gebildeten Frauen unseres Volkes in Europa als ein leuchtendes Vorbild dienen.

In Tansa, einer Stadt in Marokko, lebte ein Jude, Salomon Chatwil, glücklich und zufrieden in dem Besitze einer wackern Gattin, die ihm mehre blühende Töchter geboren. Der Liebling und Stolz nicht nur der Eltern, sondern Aller, die sie kannten, war Zuleika, die im Jahre 5591 (1831), der Zeit unserer Erzählung, den Lenz zum zwölften Male wiederkehren sah. Die Natur wollte ihr Meisterstück machen, als sie Zuleika schuf. Eine vollendetere, reizendere Schönheit hat die glühende Sonne Afrikas nicht beschienen; das schönste Ebenmaß der Glieder, das makelloseste, blendendste Weiß, gekrönt von dem prächtigsten, glänzenden Haarschmuck und nur unterbrochen von dem sanftesten, frischen Roth der Wangen, während das herrlichste Augenpaar von langen sammetnen Wimpern umschlossen prangte. Damit vereinigte Zuleika einen hellen, klaren Verstand und das sanfteste, anmuthigste Benehmen. Alle diese Vorzüge reizten den Neid der umwohnenden Muselmänner. Es ist Sünde, sagten sie, daß eine solche Perle Eigenthum der Juden ist, und Verbrechen, dieses Kleinod ihnen zu lassen.

Unter dem, von falschen muselmanischen Zeugen bestätigten Vorgeben, Zuleika sei Willens, zum Islam überzutreten, drangen sie in die friedliche Wohnung ihres Vaters, bemächtigten sich des schönen Mädchens und schleppten es nach Fez, wo sie ihre Beute, eine willkommene kostbare Gabe, dem Prinzen-Thronfolger, Sohn des marokkanischen Kaisers, zur Verfügung stellten.

Eine solche Schönheit hatte auch sein verwöhntes Auge bis jetzt noch nicht gesehen; wie geblendet blieb er vor ihr stehen. Hand und Herz, alle Würden einer Kaiserin bot er für ihren Besitz, daran nur die Bedingung knüpfend, seinen Glauben anzunehmen. Ruhig und entschieden wies sie dieses Anerbieten zurück; vergebens waren alle Ueberredungskünste und Versprechen der Großen des Hofes. Ihre Antwort lautete: Die ganze Welt mit



allen ihren Reizen und Gütern ist Nichts gegen Gott und sein heiliges Gesetz. Er ist Herr des Himmels und der Erde, Schöpfer und Meister aller Wesen; seiner Macht unterthan ist jeder Mensch vor seiner Geburt schon, nach seinem Tode noch. Er der unsere Ahnen aus Aegypten erlöste, hat uns zum Träger seines großen Gesetzes gemacht. Diesem Gesetze beuge ich mich, ich bin bereit es mit meinem Tode zu besiegeln und wenn der Herr es erfordert, mich willig ihm zum Opfer zu bringen. Wenn ihr mir auch alle Schätze der Welt zu Füßen legt, weiche ich doch um keine Spanne Weite von diesen meinen Worten; verfahrt mit mir nach eurem Belieben. —

Der Prinz, der seinen Antrag zurückgewiesen sah, versuchte nun mit Strenge zu erreichen, was der Ueberredung nicht gelingen wollte. Er ließ Zuleika in den Kerker bringen. Als man glaubte, daß Leid und Entbehrung ihre junge Kraft genugsam mürbe gemacht hätten, wurden zum Islam übergetretene Judenfrauen zu ihr ins Gefängniß gesandt, die durch Versprechen aller Art und durch das Beispiel ihres eigenen Lebens Zuleika zur Nachgiebigkeit veranlassen sollten. Diese Frauen entledigten sich ihres Auftrages im vollsten Maße. Alle Herrlichkeiten, die das sinnliche südliche Herz reizen konnten, alle Vorstellungen, die nur der Verstand zu erklügeln vermochte, alle Schreckniſſe, die auch den tapfersten Mann zu erschüttern im Stande wären, wurden aufgeboten. Aber vergeblich; an dem festen, gottergebenen Sinn des Mädchens prallten alle Angriffe, die einen wie die anderen, spurlos ab. Sie antwortete in ihrer frommen, ruhigen Weise: Ihr wollt mich überreden? das Erdendasein ist ja nur ein vorüberziehender Schatten, wie ein flüchtiger Augenblick in dem ewigen Leben; lieber eine kurze Stunde in Unglück und Schmerzen und ewige Seligkeit, als ein Leben in Freude und Wollust, dem die unendliche Zeit der Reue im Jenseits folgt. Jeder Mensch muß sterben, selbst der Höchste und Mächtigste fällt den Würmern zur Beute; nur der Herr der Heerscharen ist ewig, seinem Walten unterwerfe ich mich willig. Ihr sagt, der leiseste Wunsch meines Herzens solle verwirklicht werden; nun wohl, ich flehe zu Gott, daß er mir Kraft und Stärke in seinem Dienst verleihe, daß ich

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würdig sei, Tochter des jüdischen Volkes zu heißen; laßt mich nur schnell enden.

Einen letzten Versuch wollte der Prinz anstellen. Er ließ die Chachamim der Stadt rufen und erklärte ihnen, das Leben sämmtlicher jüdischer Einwohner sei in Gefahr, gelinge es ihnen nicht, Zuleika seinem Begehr willig zu machen. Zitternd für ihr eignes Leben und das Leben ihrer Brüder, verfügten sich die Chachamim in den Kerker. Sie wiesen das gepeinigte Mädchen auf das Beispiel Esthers hin, durch deren Einfluß so großes Heil ihrem Volke erwachsen. Zuleika wies aber auch sie mit der Antwort zurück: Esther hatte nicht nöthig, dem väterlichen Heiligthum zu entsagen, ich soll ihm untreu werden. Haltet ihr das für erlaubt, wohlan, so gebet eure Tochter dem Fürsten hin; ich erfülle das Gesetz, wenn es Gottes Wille ist, mit meinem Tode.

Ein solcher unerhörter Widerstand, dem Fürsten geleistet, konnte nur mit dem Tode gesühnt werden. Der Befehl zur Enthauptung war alsbald gegeben. Die schönste der Jungfrauen in dem Schmucke der Tugend, in der Blüthe der Jahre wurde zum Richtplatze geführt.

Auch der Henker sollte noch zuvor das Mittel der Ueberredung zum letzten Male gebrauchen, in einer Weise, die nur der Henker kennt und die nur er vollbringen kann. Auf dem Schaffote versetzte er seinem Schlachtopfer mehre Stiche mit dem Schwerte in den Nacken und forderte sie zum Gehorsam auf. Kafir ben Kafir! rief das muthige Mädchen, spare deine Mühe! und mit dem Ausrufe: Höre Israel, Gott allein ist unser Herr, er ist einzig! fiel das Haupt unter dem wuchtigen Hiebe des Schergen.

Mit dem zum Himmel aufspritzenden Blutstrahle entwich die Wuth des Fürsten; er fühlte Reue und hätte gerne das Leben zurückgerufen zu der schönen entseelt daliegenden Hülle. Ohnmächtige Macht der Mächtigen! zu zerstören vermögen sie das Saitenspiel, aber auch nicht eine Saite neu aufzuspannen.

Der Leichnam wurde dem Nassi der Gemeinde, Raphael Zerphati, zur Bestattung übergeben. Auf Zuleikas Grab errichtete man ein Monument und wird dasselbe noch heutigen Tags von Juden und Muselmännern als eine heilige Stätte verehrt.

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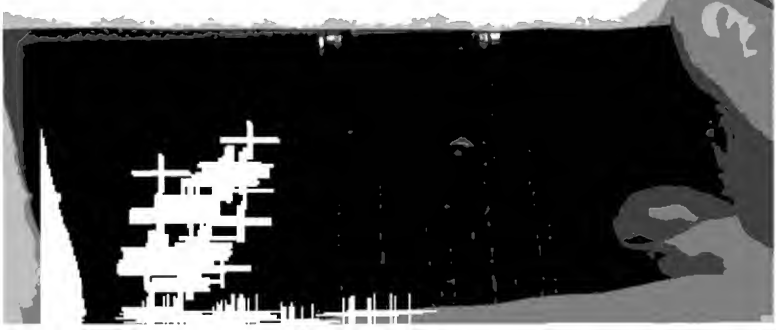
Als heiliger Eid gilt noch jetzt der Schwur bei Zuleikas Angedenken.

Der Prinz setzte den Eltern seines Opfers einen Jahrgehalt aus. Zwei der Schwestern fielen in Irrsinn über Zuleikas Schicksal. Ich habe im Jahre 1854 die Bekanntschaft ihrer Familie gemacht und Augenzeugen ihrer Hinrichtung gesprochen. Von verschiedenen afrikanischen Chachamim ist Zuleikas Heldenmuth und Gottesfurcht in Gedichten behandelt worden; von einigen, die mir zu Gesichte kamen, habe ich Abschriften genommen.

Tretet heran, Mütter und Töchter meines Volkes, an das Grab Zuleikas; lernet die Größe kennen, die hier gelebt. Seht, das that ein unwissendes, ungebildetes, würdet ihr sagen, afrikanisches Mädchen, das von allem Flitter und Tand der europäischen Cultur Nichts wußte, das vielleicht nicht einmal schreiben konnte. Ob ihr eure Töchter so erzieht und kräftigt in dem göttlichen Gesetze, daß sie würdig seien, Zuleikas Schwestern zu heißen, ob im gebildeten Europa viele Zuleikas existiren? — ich weiß es nicht; — fragt und antwortet euch selbst.

Trotz dieser Bedrückungen findet man in Marokko, Fez, Tetuan, Magador, Tansa, Suera und den vielen andern Städten des Reiches eine große Anzahl Juden, über 100,000 Seelen, ja nach der Behauptung der Landesbewohner an 200,000. Sie sind alle sehr religiös, ihre Chachamim sind wohl unterrichtet im Talmud, beschäftigen sich jedoch vielfach mit der Kabalistik, machen sogar ein Geschäft aus derselben, indem sie Amulette abschreiben. Auch die arabischen Marabus treiben solche Amulettgeschäfte. Im Ganzen genommen sind die Juden ziemlich gebildet, mit Ausnahme des Landstriches von Tifelel, auf der Straße nach Timbuctu liegend, wo jetzt der Kronprinz als Vicekönig regiert: dort sind die Juden sehr ungebildet. An manchen Orten besitzen sie bedeutende Geschäfte und man findet auch sehr reiche unter ihnen, dennoch aber leben sie unglücklich. Ich würde in Wiederholungen verfallen, wollte ich ihre Lage schildern, und verweise auf meine Berichte über die Juden in Persien; wie dort, so lastet auch in



Marokko Verfolgung, Druck, Haß und Fanatismus von oben und unten auf unseren Glaubensgenossen.

Noch weiter sogar wie in Persien geht hier die Bedrückung, denn während dort die Juden in Landestracht umhergehen können, sind sie hier gezwungen, sich durch einen schwarzen Fez zu kennzeichnen. Ebenso geht es den Christen, die in Persien noch einiger Vorzüge vor den Juden sich zu erfreuen haben, während sie hier auf gleiche Weise behandelt werden. So müssen z. B. Juden und Christen, wenn sie an einer Moschee vorübergehen, die Schuhe ausziehen und das Haupt entblößen, und boshafte Knaben streuen Glasstücke in den Straßenschmutz, um ihre Füße zu zerreißen. Wenn ein Europäer es wagte, in seiner heimathlichen Kleidung die Straßen zu betreten, so würde er keine Stunde des Lebens sicher sein, unter dem Rufe „Giaur" würde ihn ein Hagel von Steinen empfangen. Es ist wirklich zu verwundern, daß ein Land, welches so nahe bei Europa liegt und in so vielem und großem geschäftlichen Verkehr mit demselben steht, so wild und barbarisch gegen Fremde und Eingeborne sein darf. Nur in den großen Hafenstädten sorgen die Consuln dafür, daß die Europäer einigen Schutz und Recht finden, während im Innern der Druck um so größer wird.

Wenn alle Großmächte Europas gemeinschaftlich gegen solchen Barbarismus in ihrer nächsten Nähe einschreiten wollten, so hätten sie Großes für sich, für die Wissenschaft und für die Unterdrückten gethan.

Die großen Schwierigkeiten veranlaßten mich, nachdem ich genug gesehen hatte, um mir ein Bild von den Zuständen des Landes zu machen, nach Algerien zurückzukehren. Von dort aus ging ich nach kurzem Aufenthalt nach Marseille in Frankreich hinüber.

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Capitel 43.

Allgemeine Betrachtungen über die Juden von Nordafrika.

Ihre Sitten und Gebräuche. — Ceremonien bei Haltung des Sabbaths und der Festtage, bei Geburts-, Heiraths- und Todesfällen.

Die meisten Juden gehen an den Wochentagen Morgens und Abends zur Synagoge und beten in gewöhnlicher Weise ihr Gebet. Am Sabbath und an Festtagen versammeln sich Alle im Tempel, der Gottesdienst wird feierlich abgehalten, und es ist sehr erbaulich, ihm beizuwohnen. Er ist in mehre Abtheilungen eingetheilt, und wer ein schönes sonores Organ hat, liest einige Abschnitte aus dem Gebete vor bis zum Istabach, wo der Vorbeter den Altar betritt und bis zur Herausnahme des Pentateuch vorliest. Piutim werden nur in der ersten Osternacht, am Neujahrstage und Versöhnungsfeste gesprochen. Die Gesänge sind sehr schön und machen einen erhebenden Eindruck auf den Hörer. Das Ritual der Gebete ist sowohl in Asien wie in Afrika nach portugiesischem Gebrauche, und die Gesänge sind die landesüblichen.

Die Herausnahme des Pentateuch wird mit Gesängen begleitet. Bei der Vorlesung des Abschnittes aus dem Pentateuch ist es dort wie auch wohl in Asien Gebrauch, daß der jüngere von den Vorgerufenen, der gut lesen kann, seinen Abschnitt selbst vorliest. In manchen Orten ist es gebräuchlich, daß der zum Lesen der Thora Vorgerufene, wenn er vom Altar zurücktritt, den Verwandten die Hand drückt, sie auf Stirn, Schulter und Hand küßt, und von den Gemeindemitgliedern auf ähnliche Weise beglückwünscht und geehrt wird.

Wenn Jemand aus der Gemeinde heirathet, so werden am Sabbath in der Synagoge zwei Pentateuche aufgestellt, von denen einer mit Schmucksachen verziert ist. Wenn dann der Wochenabschnitt zu Ende ist, so wird der Bräutigam aufgerufen. Er tritt mit seinem Pentateuch vor den Altar und liest die Geschichte

von Abraham, als er seinen Knecht Eliezer aussandte, um für seinen Sohn Isaak ein Weib zu suchen.[1] Wenn er einen Vers vorgelesen hat, so übersetzen einige auserwählte Kinder denselben in die Landessprache und wiederholen ihn mit Ceremonien und schönen Gesängen. Es wird dies für eine besondere Ehre gehalten und die Kinder bemühen sich sehr, durch Fleiß zu solchen Auszeichnungen zu gelangen.

Auch die kleinen Kinder tragen in der Synagoge beim Gottesdienste Taleth. Außer der Synagoge aber giebt es auch Erwachsene, die, wie in Kurdistan, keine Zizith tragen; man findet dies sowohl in Marokko, wie in den Dörfern Algeriens, da man im Allgemeinen nicht strenge auf diese Sitte hält. In Afrika sowohl wie in Asien kommen die Frauen nicht in die Synagoge, nur bei den Beschneidungen sind sie in derselben anwesend, auch giebt es wohl alte Frauen, die an Festtagen dem Gottesdienste beiwohnen. Im Allgemeinen findet man in beiden Welttheilen nur höchst selten eine Frau, die lesen oder schreiben kann, was sich nicht allein auf die Juden, sondern auf alle Eingebornen bezieht.

Die Sabbathe und Festtage werden in Afrika wie in Asien von den Juden sehr strenge beobachtet und heilig gehalten, sowohl was den Gottesdienst, als was die Geschäfte, Vergnügungen ꝛc. anbetrifft. Ich habe während meines Aufenthaltes fast niemals gefunden, daß am Sabbath Geschäfte getrieben werden oder daß gearbeitet wird, es müßte denn ein dringender Nothfall sein. In mancher anderen Beziehung ist man jedoch nicht so strenge in der Beobachtung der Gesetze wie bei uns in Europa. z. B. beim Backen der Osterkuchen und beim Genusse mancher Speisen und Getränke. So essen die Juden dort am Osterfeste Reis, Erbsen, Bohnen ꝛc. und trinken Rum.

Die Gebräuche und Vorbereitungen am Osterabend werden in derselben Weise begangen wie bei uns in Europa, nur hat man in Afrika die Sitte, daß beim Verlesen des ersten Abschnitts vom Auszug aus Aegypten einer aus dem Familienkreise aufsteht, und die Schüssel mit den an jene Zeiten erinnernden Speisen jedem der Anwesenden einige Augenblicke über den Kopf hält;

[1] 1. Buch Moses Cap. 24, V. 1—8.

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derjenige, dem dies etwa nicht geschehen wäre, würde sich für sehr unglücklich halten. Namentlich findet man diesen Gebrauch in Tunis, während die Gebildeten in Algerien ihn nicht kennen. In Asien hat man bei dieser Feierlichkeit einen anderen hübschen Gebrauch eingeführt. Es wird nämlich ein Knabe förmlich als Pilger angezogen. Mit dem Wanderstabe in der Hand und dem Reisesacke mit Brod auf der Schulter tritt er vor Beginn der Vorlesung in den versammelten Kreis der Hausgenossen. Der Hausherr fragt dann den Knaben: „Woher kommst du, Pilgersmann?“ — „Aus Mizrajim“, antwortet der Knabe. — „Bist du erlöst von den Banden der Sklaverei?“ fragt man weiter. — Der Knabe spricht: „Wohl, ich bin frei und erlöst!“ — „Und wohin willst du?“ lautet die weitere Frage. — „Nach Jeruschalajim!“ erwiedert der Pilgerknabe. Unter großem Jubel und freudigem Begrüßen beginnen darauf die Anwesenden die Hagada. Die Vorlesung derselben geschieht während der ersten Osternacht in hebräischer Sprache, während der zweiten Nacht in der Landessprache. Die Frauen nehmen überall daran Theil. Festliche Lieder und Hymnen werden dazu gesungen, und die ganze Feier macht nicht allein einen sehr angenehmen, sondern sogar einen erhebenden begeisternden Eindruck. Vom dritten Tage an bis zum sechsten wird sehr viel Karten gespielt, woran sogar die Chachamim Theil nehmen. In der ganzen Festzeit aber wird nicht an Arbeit und Geschäfte gedacht, sondern die Tage werden mit frommen Uebungen und Vergnügungen hingebracht. Am letzten Abend des Festes werden frische Getreidehalme vom Felde in die Häuser gebracht, mit Blumen und jungem Grün in den Zimmern umhergestreut und auf die Tische gestellt, um symbolisch den Frühling und den Segen eines neuen Jahres ins Haus ziehen zu lassen. — In Algier ist es Sitte, in dieser Nacht zum ältesten Chacham zu gehen und den Segen über sich aussprechen zu lassen. — In Oran hat man ebenfalls einen besonderen Gebrauch. In der Nacht vor dem ersten Festabend, welche man Lel-el-Ros nennt, wird in allen Familien nichts anderes als gekochte Lammsköpfe gegessen. Ich konnte keinen anderen Grund für diesen Gebrauch finden, als daß ich mir dachte, es sei eine Erinnerung an den Karban-Pesach, an die Opfer am Abend vor

dem Feste. In der letzten Festnacht, Lel-el-Maimun genannt, wird durchaus kein Fleisch, sondern nur Milchspeise genossen, auch geht man allgemein an diesem Abende zu Bekannten und Verwandten, um dort zu speisen. — In Oran und Marokko stellt man neben den Blumen und Halmen auch eine Schüssel mit Gold und Schmucksachen auf den Tisch als Symbol für den Reichthum und Segen, den das Jahr dem Hause bringen möge. In Tetuan in Marokko stellt man auch ein Gefäß mit Wasser, in welchem lebendige Fische schwimmen, auf den Tisch. — Die Besuche, welche man sich gegenseitig in dieser letzten Festnacht abstattet, dauern bis nach Mitternacht. Wenn die jungen Leute dann über die Straßen zu Hause gehen, so ruft irgend einer von ihnen: „Maimun!" worauf ein Anderer antwortet: „Misoth!" ein dritter: „Fertsch Allah!" — Ich erkundigte mich nach der Bedeutung dieser oftmaligen lauten Zurufe und erfuhr, daß Maimun und Misoth die Namen zweier glücklicher Personen seien, und daß man zur Erinnerung an sie, sich ein ähnliches Glück wünschend, ihre Namen einander zurufe, der dritte Ausruf: „Fertsch Allah!" Gott gebe Glück! bedeute.

Das Fest Schewuoth (Wochenfest) hat ebenfalls seine eigenthümlichen Gebräuche. Man versammelt sich am ersten Abend in den Häusern; abwechselnd liest der Eine oder der Andere laut einen Abschnitt der Thora ꝛc. vor und in den jedesmaligen Pausen wird Kaffee und anderes Getränk herumgereicht. Am Morgen geht man, wie bereits erwähnt, zur Synagoge, um zu beten.

Am Tissa-Beaw (Tempelzerstörung) versammelt man sich Abends in der Synagoge, wo die Kinoth (Klagelieder Jeremias) und andere bezügliche Lieder vom Chacham vorgelesen werden. Nachdem die Vorlesung beendigt ist, wird in der Landessprache die Geschichte von Chana und ihren sieben Söhnen, die zum Abfall von der Religion gezwungen werden sollten und deshalb getödtet wurden, vorgetragen, so wie sie im Medrasch Rabba vorkommt. Der Chacham und die Gemeinde singen abwechselnd mit verschiedenen Trauergesängen Vers um Vers. In Kurdistan hat man einen anderen Gebrauch, der Chacham erhebt sich und spricht: Meine Brüder, heute ist es schon so viele Jahre, daß unser heiliger Tempel zerstört wurde und wir haben ihn noch

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nicht wieder aufbauen können!“ Bei diesen Worten werden alle Lichter ausgelöscht. Alle werfen sich mit dem Gesichte auf die Erde und beginnen zu klagen und zu weinen; dann wird ein einziges Licht angezündet und mit Trauergesängen die Geschichte von Chana in kurdischer Sprache vorgetragen. Am Morgen versammelt man sich wieder in der Synagoge, wobei in manchen Orten die Männer Tephilim anlegen, man verrichtet die üblichen Gebete und die Kinoth werden vorgetragen; der Pentateuch ist schwarz verhüllt und Asche gestreut. Bei der Vorlesung der Hafthora wird jeder Vers in die Landessprache übertragen und commentirt, wobei Trauerlieder gesungen werden.

Am Feste Rosch-ha-Schana (Neujahrsfest) versammelt man sich in der Synagoge, wo die Gebete verrichtet und einige Piutim gesprochen werden. Die Vorlesung aus dem Pentateuch geschieht wie in Europa, nur beim Schofarblasen verhält man sich in Asien und Afrika ganz ruhig und hört die Töne der symbolischen Trompete ohne Bewegung an. Der Gottesdienst wird noch am Vormittag mit dem Musaph-Gebete geschlossen.

Am Festtage Erew-Jom-Kipur (Tag vor dem Versöhnungsfeste) findet man, daß in Asien und Afrika der Gebrauch des Caparoth an einigen Orten sehr strenge, an andern nicht so strenge befolgt wird. Am Nachmittage dieses Tages wird in der Synagoge das Vespergebet verrichtet und die Ceremonie der Malkot wie bei uns verrichtet. In Persien wird dieser Gebrauch nach der Beschreibung des Talmud im Messechet Macoth ausgeübt. Der Betreffende entblößt sich bis auf die Hüften, lehnt sich dann an eine Säule und erhält seine 39 regelmäßigen tüchtigen Streiche mit der Malka, nachher geht er in die Tewilla (kaltes Bad). Als die Reihe an mich kam, weigerte ich mich, den Gebrauch mitzumachen, indem ich sagte: „Meine Brüder! ich als ein Europäer werde mich den Streichen nicht unterwerfen, da man in meiner Heimath einen anderen Gebrauch befolgt; ich werde mich vor dem Versöhnungstage nicht knuten lassen, da ich möglicherweise krank davon werden kann.“ Man disputirte eine kurze Zeit unter Lachen über die Sache und ließ mich dann unbelästigt. — Am Morgen und Abend geht man zur Synagoge; manche ziehen dazu weiße Kleider an. Der Morgengottesdienst

dauert bis Mittag, dann geht man auf zwei Stunden zu Hause. Der Nachmittagsgottesdienst dauert bis gegen Abend. Der Festtag wird sehr strenge gehalten.

Das Fest Sucoth (Laubhüttenfest) wird sehr strenge beobachtet und man ißt nur in der Laube; auch hat fast ein Jeder Lulaw (Palmzweige) und Ethrog (Paradiesapfel). Das Fest wird mit vielen Feierlichkeiten und Vergnügungen zugebracht.

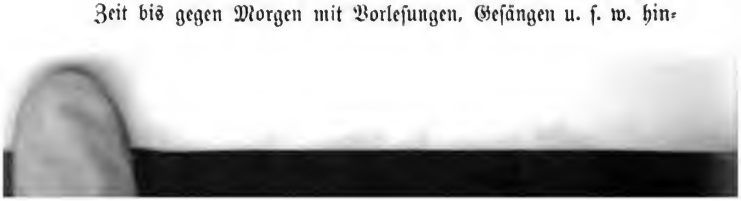
In der Nacht vor dem Feste Hoschaana Raba versammelt man sich im Familiencirkel zu Haus und hält Vorlesungen wie in Europa. In Tripolis werden zwischen jedem Abschnitte Selichoth gesprochen und Schofar geblasen. Dabei wird viel Kaffee getrunken. Morgens geht man zur Synagoge, betet und spricht die Hoschaanoth. Nachher nimmt Jeder seine Hoschaana mit, man macht sich gegenseitig Besuche und schlägt sich mit der Hoschaana über die Schultern. Es wird kein Rang und Stand berücksichtigt, auch die Frauen thun dasselbe und Jeder rechnet sich die Schläge mit der Hoschaana zur Ehre.

Zur Simchat-Thora (Gesetzesfreude) werden in manchen Orten die Hakafoth nur einmal gemacht. Es stellt sich dabei einer aus der Gemeinde mit dem Pentateuch auf den Altar und die Gemeinde zieht siebenmal unter Absingung der bestimmten Piutim um denselben herum.

Das Chanoka- (Erinnerung an die Makkabäer) und Purimfest (Fest der Esther) werden ebenso wie in Europa gefeiert.

Ich habe die Gebräuche bei Gottesdienst und Feier der Feste genau beobachtet, um dieselben, die hier ganz unbekannt sind, mitzutheilen und aufzuklären.

Bei der Geburt eines Knaben werden folgende Gebräuche beobachtet: Vom Tage der Geburt an bis zur Beschneidung wird jeden Abend in dem betreffenden Hause ein Festmahl gehalten, zu welchem Bekannte und Verwandte eingeladen werden. Das Festmahl in der ersten Nacht nennt man Seudath Eliahu (Mahl des Elias). Die letzte Nacht vor der Beschneidung wird Bilada genannt. Es versammeln sich auch dann wieder Verwandte und Freunde. Die Chachamim lesen etwa zwei Stunden, darauf wird das Festmahl eingenommen und nach dessen Beendigung die Zeit bis gegen Morgen mit Vorlesungen, Gesängen u. s. w. hin-



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gebracht. Am Morgen des achten Tages findet dann die Beschneidung in der Synagoge unter großen Festlichkeiten statt.

Bei der Geburt eines Mädchens werden am Abend vor dem achten Tage die Chachamim, die Verwandten und Freunde zu einem Feste geladen. Das neugeborne Kind wird in einer kleinen Wiege dem ersten Chacham überreicht, der es sodann einem zweiten übergiebt; dieser reicht es einem dritten hin und so geht es weiter, bis das Kind durch Aller Hände gekommen ist. Dreimal wird diese Ceremonie unter dem Singen von Piutim wiederholt und jeder der Anwesenden legt, so oft er die Wiege mit dem Kinde in die Hände bekommt, ein Geldstück in dieselbe, welches für die Hebamme bestimmt ist.

Die Barmizwa (Confirmation) wird in folgender Weise gefeiert. Einige Wochen vorher, wenn ein Knabe 13 Jahr alt wird, übt ihm der Chacham einen Vortrag ein. Am Sabbath vor der Barmizwa, Tephilim (Denkriemen) genannt, werden zunächst die Verwandten zu einem Mahle versammelt, welches bis zum Sonntag Morgen dauert. Am Nachmittage dieses Tages gehen die Frauen festlich gekleidet zu allen Freunden und Bekannten sowie zu den Mitschülern des Knaben, um sie zu dem Feste einzuladen. Wenn Alle versammelt sind, läßt man einen Barbier kommen, welcher dem Confirmanden und seinen Mitschülern den Kopf glatt abrasirt, während jeder Theilnehmer am Feste ein Geldstück giebt, das für den Barbier bestimmt ist. Darauf findet ein fröhliches Mahl statt, das sich oft bis zum Morgen hinzieht. Am Montag Morgen wird die Synagoge festlich geschmückt. Der Chacham mit dem Lehrer geht in das elterliche Haus des Confirmanden, wo man demselben Taleth und Tephilim anlegt, und ihn dann in Prozession mit Gesängen und Vorantragen von Lichtern nebst seinen Mitschülern zur Synagoge führt. Dort wird beim Gottesdienst, sobald der Pentateuch herausgenommen wird, der Vater und ein naher Verwandter des Knaben mit diesem vorgerufen. Der Chacham spricht einen Segen über den Knaben aus und dieser hält dann seinen Vortrag, während der Vater und Verwandte eine Spende für die Armen übergeben. Nach Beendigung der Ceremonie gratuliren Alle dem Knaben und begleiten ihn dann zu Hause, wo wiederum ein Mahl eingenommen wird.

Dann begiebt sich der Knabe mit Taleth und Tephilim angethan, begleitet von seinen Mitschülern, zu den sämmtlichen Frauen seiner Verwandtschaft, um einen Besuch abzustatten. Jede seiner weiblichen Verwandten wickelt einen Ring seiner Tephilim auf und macht ihm ein Geldgeschenk. Wenn alle Besuche abgestattet sind, kehrt der Knabe nach Hause zurück, legt Taleth und Tephilim ab und geht am Nachmittag mit seinen Genossen spazieren, bei welcher Gelegenheit die empfangenen Geschenke verzehrt werden. Am Abend versammeln sich nochmals Verwandte und Freunde bei den Eltern des Knaben zu einem Feste, das bis zum nächsten Morgen dauert und die Feierlichkeit beschließt. Bei Mädchen findet keine Confirmation statt, außer in einigen Städten Algeriens, wo man sie jetzt einführt.

Bei Heirathen finden folgende Ceremonien statt. Der Sabbath vor der Trauung wird sehr feierlich begangen. Am Abend vor der Trauung versammeln sich die Angehörigen und Freunde im Brauthause mit den Chachamim. In der Mitte des Hofes wird ein geschmückter Sessel aufgestellt und neben diesen einige andere Stühle. Die Chachamim, die Eltern und Verwandten führen dann die Braut mit brennenden Lichtern zu dem Sessel, wo sie sich niedersetzt. Zu ihrer Seite setzen sich die Chachamim und darauf abwechselnd die Eltern und die am meisten geehrten Gäste. Dies währt unter dem Singen von Piutim etwa zwei Stunden, dann wird die Braut ins Haus zurückgeführt und die Gesellschaft trennt sich. Am Hochzeitsmorgen geht der Bräutigam mit seinen Freunden und die Braut mit ihren Gespielinnen zum Bade. Am Nachmittage, nachdem der Bräutigam Festgewänder und Taleth angelegt hat, wird er von den Chachamim und den Seinigen zur Synagoge geführt, wo das Vespergebet verrichtet wird, worauf man ihn wieder nach Hause geleitet. Zu der Ceremonie der Trauung selbst wird ein hoher verzierter Sessel im Hofe aufgestellt, zu welchem die Chachamim und Eltern wechselweise die verschleierte Braut führen. Nachdem sie sich auf den Sessel niedergelassen, tritt der Bräutigam an ihre rechte Seite. Der Chacham hüllt das junge Paar in das Taleth des Bräutigams und spricht die Berachot, worauf er die Trauringe an Braut und Bräutigam giebt. Die Gesänge der Versammelten

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verherrlichen die Feierlichkeit. Dann wird die Ketuba (Ehecontract) vorgelesen und darauf die Trauung beendet. Nach Beendigung derselben wird das junge Paar ins Haus geleitet und die Gesellschaft trennt sich, um am Abend zum Festmahle sich wieder zu versammeln. Während desselben wird das junge Paar in ein besonderes Zimmer geführt und allein gelassen. Der Bräutigam kehrt nach einiger Zeit wieder zur Gesellschaft zurück und wenn er sich von der Jungfräulichkeit seiner jungen Frau überzeugt hat, so empfängt er die Glückwünsche der Verwandten und der Gesellschaft. Dann wird beim fröhlichen Mahle unter Musik und Gesang die Nacht bis zum beginnenden Tage verbracht. Sieben Tage lang nach der Hochzeit bleibt das junge Paar im Hochzeitshause zusammen und an jedem Abend beginnen und wiederholen sich die Feste. Am Sabbath nach der Hochzeit wird der Bräutigam unter Gesängen mit großer Begleitung zur Synagoge geführt, während die Braut zu Hause bleibt. Bei der Vorlesung des Wochenabschnittes, wozu sämmtliche Verwandte vorgerufen werden, spenden diese und der Bräutigam bedeutende Gaben für die Chachamim und die Armen. Unter Gesängen und der früheren Begleitung zieht man ins Brauthaus zurück, wo ein letztes großes Fest angerichtet wird, das unter Freude und Jubel bis zum nächsten Tage dauert.

In Persien hat man einen andern Gebrauch. Es versammeln sich auch dort während der sieben Tage nach der Trauung am Abend die Chachamim, Angehörigen und Freunde im Brauthause. Das geschmückte junge Paar wird auf eine hohe, an der Zimmerwand errichtete Tribüne gesetzt, wo zwei vergoldete Wachskerzen neben ihnen brennen. Die Gesellschaft singt einige Stunden Piutim, nimmt dann ein Mahl ein und trennt sich, was dann an den folgenden Tagen während der Woche wiederholt wird.

Bei Beerdigungen wird ein alter biblischer Gebrauch befolgt, der im Jeremias Cap. 9, V. 19 erwähnt ist. Sobald Jemand stirbt, werden die Mekononot (Klageweiber) gerufen, welche sich in die Nähe des Todten niedersetzen und mit weinerlicher Stimme Klagelieder in der Landessprache anstimmen. Die Ceremonien sind dabei die im Talmud, Messechet Moed Katan erwähnten. Die Frauen der Verwandtschaft des Todten erheben

ein lautes Wehegeschrei, raufen sich die Haare und zerkratzen sich das Gesicht bis es blutrünstig wird, was Moses im 5. Buch Cap. 16, V. 1 und Cap. 21, V. 5 ausdrücklich verbietet. Die Chachamim haben sich schon viele Mühe gegeben diesen Gebrauch abzuschaffen, was jedoch bisher nicht gelungen ist. Die Klagelieder sind dem Stande des Todten angemessen und es werden fast bei jedem Todten andere Lieder gesungen. — In Persien singen die Chachamim die Klagelieder, jedoch reißen sich dort die Frauen die Haare nicht aus und zerkratzen sich nicht. — Dies währt etwa drei Stunden, wonach der Leichnam begraben wird. — In Persien beginnen die Klagelieder erst, wenn der Todte bereits gereinigt ist, während in Afrika die Reinigung nachher stattfindet. Beim Zuge zum Kirchhofe schreiten die Chachamim voraus und singen aus dem 91. Psalm die ersten zwölf Verse. In ganz Asien und Afrika wird der Leichnam nicht mit dem Taleth bekleidet. — In Marokko ist es sogar gebräuchlich, daß die verwandten Weiber und Kinder eines Verstorbenen noch lange Zeit nach dem Begräbnisse sich oftmals versammeln, Klagelieder um den Todten anstimmen und dabei die Haare raufen.[1]

Nachdem ich die Gebräuche von der Geburt bis zum Tode geschildert habe, schließe ich mit Salomo, der in seinem Prediger Cap. 7, V. 1 und 2 sagt: „Der Tag des Todes ist besser als der Tag der Geburt. Wohl dem, der immer an seinen Tod denkt, er wird keinen Stolz besitzen!“ und wünsche, daß in Erfüllung gehen möge, was der Prophet Jesaias Cap. 25, V. 8 und 9 sagt: „Denn er wird den Tod verschlingen ewiglich. Und der Herr wird die Thränen von allen Angesichtern abwischen, und wird aufheben die Schmach seines Volks in allen Landen, denn der Herr hat es gesagt. Zu der Zeit wird man sagen: Siehe, das ist unser Gott, auf den wir harren, und er wird uns helfen; das ist der Herr, auf den wir harren, daß wir uns freuen und fröhlich sein in seinem Namen.“

[1] Rabbi Pethachia S. 169 erwähnt einen eben solchen Gebrauch, der im Lande Kasria stattfindet, wo die Mütter ihren Töchtern die Klagelieder einüben. Es scheint dieses ein alter Gebrauch zu sein, von dem schon Jeremias Cap. 9, V. 19 spricht.

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Die portugiesischen Entdeckungen und Eroberungen in Beziehung zu den Juden.*

Von Dr. M. Kayserling.

João I., Heinrich der Navigator, Affonso der Afrikaner, João de Menezes, Azambuja, Vasco de Gama, Columbus, Albuquerque, Cabral, Cortez, Pizarro — welche Namen genialer und gewaltiger Menschen! Welche Geschichten und Großthaten knüpfen sich an diese Abentenrer und Eroberer! Mit welchem Reiz und Entzücken lauscht nicht der Knabe den Erzählungen ihrer Entdeckungen, ihrer Seegefechte, ihrer Schlachten? Kein Volk auf europäischem Boden war von solchem Unternehmungsgeist beseelt als die Portugiesen; den Entdeckungen ihrer Admirale und Infanten verdankten sie ihre Macht und Portugal gelangte zu Besitzungen, über deren Größe die Welt das kleine Mutterland und dieses sich endlich selbst vergaß.

Sollten die genannten Männer heroischen Ruhmes, sollten die Entdeckungen, die das kleine schmale Küstenland zur Großmacht erhoben, in gar keiner Beziehung zu dem Volke stehen, welches, wie jetzt so auch damals, allenthalben weilte und in jenen Zeiten nirgends eine Heimath fand? Sollten in der langen, langen Kette, welche portugiesische Seefahrer um Afrika's Küste legten und deren letzter goldener Ring in Indiens Paradies haftete, sollten in dieser Kette nicht auch die Juden ein Glied bilden? Es hat wohl noch Niemand daran gezweifelt, und doch hat noch Niemand es versucht, solche der Geschichte der Juden scheinbar fern liegende Weltereignisse mit den Juden und ihrer Geschichte in Verbindung zu bringen. Welcher Nutzen aber

* Zum Schluß gebe ich den schönen Aufsatz des Herrn Dr. Kayserling, welcher sich in Frankel's „Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judenthums," Decemberheft 1858, befindet.

aus einer solchen Behandlung der Weltgeschichte der jüdischen Wissenschaft erspriesst, wie durch solche Aufklärungen der Welt klar vor die Seele treten muß, daß die Juden nicht allein zum Leiden und Dulden geschaffen, sondern allenthalben und bei allen Ereignissen sich thätig und wirksam, helfend und unterstützend verhielten, bedarf keiner weiteren Erörterung.

Von diesem Gesichtspunkte aus möchte ich es in diesen Blättern versuchen, die portugiesischen Entdeckungen und Eroberungen in Beziehung zu den Juden zu behandeln und darzustellen.

Unter João I. wurde mit den Entdeckungen und Eroberungen auf afrikanischem Gebiete der Anfang gemacht. Ceuta, das große Ceuta, die erste feste, prächtigste und volkreichste Stadt Mauritaniens war genommen; das Ziel so vieljähriger, sehnsüchtiger Wünsche der nach Heldenthaten schmachtenden portugiesischen Infanten war erreicht. Ceuta war der Schlüssel der Länder des Islams, der Schrecken der Muhamedaner, der Ausgangspunkt zu weiteren Eroberungen auf der afrikanischen Küste. Bei der Erstürmung dieser Stadt befanden sich auf der portugiesischen Armada, bei deren Abfahrt ganz Lissabon dem Hafen zuströmte, auch — Juden. Einer dieser jüdischen Seeleute erlitt im Gefechte den Tod.[1]

Einige Jahre später wurde Larasch (El Araisch) genommen. Bei dieser Gelegenheit machten die Portugiesen außer vier Mauren auch zwei Juden zu Kriegsgefangenen.[2]

Diesen ersten Heerfahrten nach Afrika wohnte der jugendliche

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1 Chronica do Conde D. Pedro, in den Collecção de livros Ineditos de Historia Portugueza (Lisboa 1790) I. fol. 259: Morreo hum Judeo, que era com os nossos etc. Die Juden in Portugal wurden also früh im Seedienste verwandt und die Erzählung des Schalschelet Hakabbala, daß Sal. Jachia Reiteranführer gewesen, gewinnt dadurch an Glaubwürdigkeit, wie man überhaupt aus keinem andern Grunde diesen Bericht für „offenbare Fabel" erklärte, als weil es eben die „Lügenkette" berichtete. Würde man Schalschel. wohl Glauben schenken, wenn er z. B. mittheilte, daß unter Alphons VII. und Alphons VIII. von Castilien Juden an den Cortesverhandlungen, welche, wie heute Jedermann weiß, unsere Landstände und Kammersitzungen auch damals vertraten, Theil genommen und sogar die Fueros mitunterzeichnet haben?

2 Chronica do Conde D. Pedro, 405.

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Infant Heinrich, welchen die Geschichte den Geographen und Navigator nennt, in eigener Person bei. Durch Entdeckungen neuer Länder sich und sein Vaterland zu verherrlichen, Portugal größere Besitzungen zu erwerben, dem Handel neue Hülfsquellen und Mannigfaltigkeit zu verschaffen, das war das hohe Ziel, welches der aufgeklärte Seefahrer sich gesteckt hatte. Mit begeisterter Liebe, mit Ausdauer und Beharrlichkeit widmete er sich der Astronomie und — Juden leisteten mit ihren Kenntnissen und Erfahrungen seinem Vorhaben den ersten Vorschub. Durch Juden gelangten über die in Handelsangelegenheiten von ihnen bereisten ihm unbekannten Gegenden die ersten Nachrichten zu ihm, durch ihre Mittheilungen steigerte sich seine Vermuthung zur Gewißheit, daß ein Weg von Europa nach Indien gefunden werden könne, und jedem jüdischen Wandersmann aus weiter Ferne ward bei dem leutseligen, auf seiner Sternwarte lebenden Prinzen die freundlichste Aufnahme.

Die Insel mit dem ewigen Frühling, Madeira, die Heimath des Stammvaters der berühmten Belmonte,[1] wurde von ihm entdeckt.

Stürme und Empörungen im Innern zogen die Portugiesen auf einige Zeit von den Unternehmungen ab.

Affonso V. lebte und webte wieder in Afrika, sein Geist war dort, wenn auch seine Person in Portugal weilte, er wandte seine ganze Thätigkeit und des Landes beste Kräfte dem maurischen Afrika zu und erwarb sich selbst den Beinamen des Afrikaners.

João II. nahm größeres Interesse an den Entdeckungen längs Afrika's Westküste, als an den Eroberungen. Freilich wollte auch er mit dem Einzugsgelde, welches die aus Spanien vertriebenen Juden zahlen mußten, die vom Vater ruhmvoll geführten Heereszüge fortsetzen, wenigstens schob er dieses als Grund vor, als einige im Rathe ihm vorwarfen, daß es nicht fromm und christlich sei, die fremden Juden des Geldes und Gewinnes wegen im Lande aufzunehmen. Ungeheure Summen flossen durch

[1] Vgl. meine Sephardim. Romantische Poesien der Juden in Spanien. (Leipzig 1859) 289.

die die Grenze überschreitenden Juden in den Staatsschatz. João zog nicht aus, seine Flotte segelte nicht nach Afrika's Küste, aber die den unglücklichen Juden gewaltsam entrissenen kleinen Kinder wurden nach jenen erst kurz zuvor entdeckten Inseln geschickt, wo kein Mensch wohnte und nur Eidechsen und Krokodile die lebenden Wesen ausmachten. Die den Juden betrügerisch abgenommenen Cruſaden wurden bei dem Tode Joãos vollständig und unversehrt im Staatsschatze vorgefunden, denn sein Unternehmen gegen Afrika ist nicht zur Ausführung gebracht worden.

Seinem Nachfolger, welcher durch die Entdeckungen in Afrika seinem Namen und Portugal ein ewiges Denkmal setzte, arbeitete João durch den Eifer, mit dem er, der gewinnsüchtige und goldgierige Monarch, das Entdeckungswerk ergriff, kräftig vor. Durch Juden ließ er Nachforschungen zu Lande anstellen, durch ihr sinniges Forschen, durch ihren scharfblickenden Geist die Mittel ausfinden, auf dem bahnlosen Element, wie Schäfer[1] sich ausdrückt, und unter einem unbekannten Himmel mit größerer Sicherheit dem dunkeln, aber heiß erstrebten Ziel entgegenzusteuern.

Einen Ritter seines Hofes, Pedro de Cavilhão, hatte João nach Jerusalem gesandt, um über das geheimnißvolle Reich des Priesterkönigs Johannes genaue Erkundigungen einzuziehen. Cavilhão durchsuchte Calicut, Goa, die vornehmsten Städte Indiens, kam bis Sofala und war, ohne sein Ziel erreicht zu haben, im Begriff nach Portugal zurückzukehren, als er in Kairo die Anwesenheit zweier Juden aus der Heimath erfuhr. Es war dieses Joseph aus Lamego[2], seines Handwerks ein Schuhmacher,

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[1] Schäfer, Geschichte von Portugal (Hamburg 1850) III, 165.

[2] So benannt nach seinem Geburts- oder wahrscheinlicher Wohnorte Lamego. Ein Wort über das Buch der ältesten, nach dieser Stadt verlegten Cortes (Cortes de Lamego) möge hier gelegentlich seine Stelle finden, zudem die irrige, auf Unkenntniß beruhende Ansicht noch immer herrscht, daß die Geschichts- und Gesetzbücher der Portugiesen von den Juden meist schweigen. In diesen Cortes handelt der §. 12 auch von den Juden: „Qui non sunt de Mauris et de infidelibus Judeis, sed Portugalenses, qui liberaverint personam Regis, aut ejus pendonem (?)*, aut

* Pendo, ein portugiesisches Wort mit lateinischer Endung: pendão, Fahne oder Führer.

und der Rabbi Abraham aus Beja.[1] Sie überbrachten 1487 dem Ritter Briefe von seinem Könige. Joseph, welcher früher in Bagdad gewesen und Alles, was er dort über Ormuz, den weltberühmten Stapelplatz der Spezereien und Reichthümer Indiens gehört, nach seiner Rückkehr dem Monarchen erzählt hatte, war von diesem beauftragt, in Begleitung des genannten Rabbi Abraham den irrenden Cavilhão aufzusuchen und ihm die Weisung zu bringen, durch Joseph Nachrichten von dem Erfolge seiner Sendung zu geben, selbst aber mit Abraham nach Ormuz zu

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ejus filium, vel generum in bello, sint Nobiles." Jahrhunderte hindurch hat man die Versammlung für stattgefunden und die darauf gefaßten Beschlüsse natürlich für echt gehalten. Erst der gelehrte Schatzmeister Antonio do Carmo Velho de Barboza hat in seinem „Exame critico das Cortes de Lamego" (Porto 1845) in schlagender Weise nachgewiesen, daß diese Cortes gar nicht existirten und auch das in drei verschiedenen Documenten aufbewahrte Libro de Cortes fingirt und untergeschoben, auch erst im 17. Jahrhundert, vielleicht zu gleicher Zeit mit einigen spanischen Judenbriefen verfaßt worden ist. Es steht historisch fest, und hat Barboza hervorzuheben vergessen, daß die Stellung der Juden in der Zeit, in welche die Cortes zu Lamego gesetzt wurden, nicht der Art gewesen sei, daß man den angezogenen Passus gegen sie hätte erlassen sollen. Dieser Passus wurde eingeschoben, um uralt zu scheinen, denn der Fabrikant konnte sich nicht denken, daß den Juden, in seinem Jahrhundert verwiesen und verbrannt, in Portugal auch einst ein glücklicherer Stern geleuchtet habe.

[1] Barros, Mariz, Faria u. A. nennen ihn Abraham de Beja, Castanhed: Morador em Beja. Schäfer l. c. III, 155, nennt ihn schlechtweg Rabbi Abraham.

Barros, Asia (Lisboa 1778) Dec. 1. Lib. 3. C. 5: E estando pera se vir a este Reyno com recado destas cousas que tinha sabido, soube que andavam alli dous Judeos de Hespanha em sua busca, com os quaes se vio mui secretamente, a hum chamauam *Rabi Habrão, natural de Béja* — Castanhed: *Morador em Béja* — e a outro *Josepe, capateiro de Lamego*; o qual Josepe havia pouco tempo que viera daquellas partes; e como soube ça no Reyno o grande desejo que el Rey tinha da informação das cousas da India, foi-lho dar conta como estivera em a cidade de Babylonia, a que ora chamam Bagodad, situada no rio Eufrates, e que alli ouvira fallar do trato da Ilcha chamada Ormuz, que estava na boca da mar da Persia, em a qual havia huma Cidade a mais celebre de todas aquellas partes, por a elle concorrerem todalas especiarias e riquezas da India, as

reiſen, um ſich dort über die Verhältniſſe in Indien zu unterrichten. Cavilhão leiſtete dem Befehle João's pünktlichen Gehorſam: er reiſte mit Abraham nach Ormuz und ſchickte Joſeph mit einer nach Aleppo ziehenden Karawane nach Portugal zurück,[1] woſelbſt auch ſein Reiſegefährte, der mit ihm vom Könige ausgeſandte Abraham nach einiger Zeit wieder eintraf, um — mit den von João vertriebenen Glaubensgenoſſen nach Afrika zu wandern.

Wie Joſeph, der Schuhmacher, und Abraham, der Rabbi, dem Könige in ſeinem Vorhaben, fremde Länder ſeinem Scepter zu unterwerfen, durch ihre Reiſen nützten, ſo trugen andere Juden in der Heimath ſelbſt durch ihre Forſchungen auf dem Gebiete der Mathematik weſentlich zu den ſpäteren Entdeckungen bei und leiſteten durch ihre Erfindungen nicht unbedeutende Dienſte.

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quaes per cafilas de camelos vinham ter as Cidades de Aleppo e Damasco. El Rey, ao tempo que soube estas e outras cousas deste Judeo era ja Pero de Cavilhão partido, ordenou se o mandar em busca delle, e assi o outro chamado R. Habrão, o Josepe pera lhe trazer recado das cartas, que per elles mandaua a Pero de Cavilhão, e Habrão pera ir com elle ver a Ilha de Ormuz e dahi se informar das cousas da India. Em as quaes cantar El Rey encommendaua muito a Pero de Cavilhão que se ainda não tinha achado o Preste João, que não receasse o trabalho té se ver com elle e lhe dar sua carta e recado; e que em quanto a esto fosse, per aquello Judeo Josepe lhe escrevesse tudo o que tinha e sabido . . . .

[1] Schäfer, l. c. III. 155, verliert Joſeph ganz plötzlich in ſeiner Schilderung und läßt Abraham ſtatt Joſeph mit den Berichten nach Portugal zurückkehren. Garcia de Reſende, Chronica del Rey D. Joam II. (Lisboa 1752) Fol. 29 b. ſchließt, ohne der Juden zu gedenken, die Erzählung mit den Worten: Cavalhão . . . . não ousou tornar. Uebereinſtimmend mit portugieſiſchen Quellen ſpricht auch Barrios von dieſen Juden. In ſeiner Historia Universal Judayco, 7, heißt es: „El Rey Don Juan Segundo de Portugal por el leal advitrio de los Judios, descubrio à la India Oriental, y por esso hizo confiança de *Rabi Abraham de Beja y de Joseph, Zarpatero de Lamego*, quando los embio por tierra à las orillas del Mar Roxo, de donde *Pedro de Covillam* se embarco com Rabi Abraham para Hormuz, y Joseph de Lamego torno al referido Rey con el aviso de lo que hasta entonces se havia descubierto.“ Nach Barrios auch Baſnage, Histoire des Juifs, IX, 729. Es iſt nicht unwahrſcheinlich, daß einer der im Verlaufe dieſer Abhandlung bei Safi oder Azamor genannten Juden, Namens Abraham, dieſer Abraham de Beja geweſen ſein mag.

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Um die Gefahr, auf unbekannter See, fern von der Küste, sich zu verirren, zu vermindern, gab João den berühmtesten Mathematikern des Reiches den Auftrag, gemeinschaftlich berathend ein Mittel auszusinnen, das die einzuhaltende Richtung der Schiffe auf dem weiten Meere sicherer nachwiese und fern von bekannten Küstengegenden einigermaßen erkennen ließe, wo man sich befände. Durch gemeinschaftliche Berathung und Nachforschung wurde der Gebrauch des Astrolabiums, das bisher nur zu astronomischen Zwecken gedient hatte, auf die Schifffahrt angewandt und diese Erfindung ist größtentheils, wenn auch nicht ganz, das Verdienst der portugiesischen Juden.

Mit Martin Behaim, dem berühmten Ritter und Seefahrer aus Nürnberg, saßen außer einem Moses, einem Abraham, wegen seiner mathematischen Kenntnisse Rabbi Abraham Estrolico [1] (der Astrolog) genannt — ihm ließ der König nach einem in Torres Vedras am 9. Juli 1493 gefaßten Beschlusse 10 Gold-Espadim auszahlen [2] — auch Joseph und Rodrigo, die jüdischen Leibärzte João's zu Rathe. Joseph und Rodigro, welche auch bei der Anfertigung der Weltkugel für den obenerwähnten Pedro de Cavilhão thätig waren,[3] sind von Bedeutung in der Geschichte der portugiesischen Entdeckungen geworden. Wer weiß, ob nicht der

[1] Gewiß denken viele Leser bei diesem Abraham Estrolico an R. Abraham Zacuto, den Verfasser des Juchasin und bekannten Astrologen Manuel's von welchem ein anderes Mal die Rede sein wird. Da wir jedoch nicht genau wissen, ob Zacuto, welcher sich allerdings 1493 schon in Portugal aufhielt, auch im Dienste João's stand, so trage ich kein Bedenken, diesen Abraham als eine von Zacuto verschiedene Person zu betrachten. Es treten überhaupt von den 70er Jahren des 15. Jahrhunderts an sehr viele gelehrte Juden mit dem bloßen Namen Abraham in den Quellen der portugiesischen Geschichte auf. Ein Abram Judai fisyquo e pelgiguem (?) (etwa Pelzhändler?) wohnte in Elvas und wurde von Alfonso V. am 27. Juli 1475 zum Rabbi seiner Gemeinde ernannt; ein anderer wird 1482 als Einwohner Bragança's, ein dritter 1484 als Rabbiner Lissabons, ein vierter als Arzt in Bragança, Aveiro und Setubal bezeichnet.

[2] Torre do Tombo, Corp. Chronic. Pars 1. Mac. 2. Doc. 18 in den Memor. d. litteratur. Portugueza (Lisboa 1812) VIII, 166. d. (Espadim ist eine Goldmünze, 300 Reis im Werthe.)

[1] Mariz, Dial. IV. Cap. X. p. 315.

genueſiſche Weltentdecker ohne Joſephs Abrathen, den König, welcher „mehr Stolz und Einbildung als Wahrheit und Gewißheit“ in den Worten des edlen Columbus fand, dennoch dahin gebracht hätte, ſeinen Worten Glauben zu ſchenken und ihm wenige Schiffe zu bewilligen, um ſeine Inſel zu entdecken? Doch João wies ihn, wie Barros erzählt,[1] an den Biſchof von Ceuta, an ſeine Gelehrten Joſeph und Rodrigo, denen er derartige kosmographiſche Entdeckungen zu unterſuchen überließ. Joſeph und Rodrigo hielten Columbus Begehr für thöricht und meinten, es gründete ſich alles auf ſeine Grillen von der Inſel Cipango des Marco Polo. Der Seefahrer wurde abſchläglich beſchieden — das Nachbarland ſollte die Früchte ſeiner Entdeckungen genießen.

Die Anwendung des Aſtrolabiums auf die Schifffahrt iſt der Juden Werk.[2] Wie wichtig dieſe Erfindung für die ſpäteren Entdeckungen wurde, liegt nicht im Bereiche unſerer Beurtheilung. Sie erleichterte und förderte den Handel der Portugieſen mit den afrikaniſchen Völkerſtämmen, die Schifffahrt nahm dadurch einen raſchen, mächtigen Fortſchritt und — nicht João, ſondern Rodrigo und Joſeph erwarben ſich für immer einen Ehrenplatz in ihrer Geſchichte, die Wiſſenſchaft gedenkt ihrer ſtets mit Achtung, wenn

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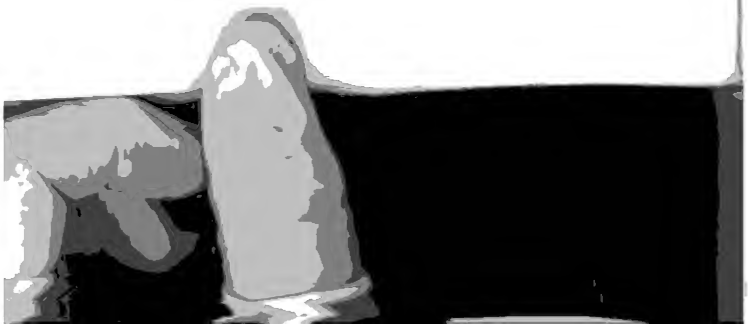
[1] Barros, Asia, Dec. 1. L. 3. Cap. 11: Com ludo a força de suas importunações, mandou que estivesse com D. Diego Ortiz, Bispo di Ceuta *e com maestre Rodrigo e maestre Joseph*, a quem elle commetia estas cousas de Cosmografia e seus descubrimentos, e todos nouveram por vaidade as palavras de christovão Colom por todo ser fundado em imaginações e cousas de Ilha Cypango de Marco Paulo... Vgl. auch Murr, diplomatiſche Geſchichte des portugieſiſchen Ritters Martin Behaims (Nürnberg 1778) 61 ff. Auch D. Pedro de Meneſes, Graf von Villa-Real, rieth dem Könige, „nicht auf Columbus' Träume zu hören“, und berief ſich dabei auf Joſeph und Rodrigo.

[2] Barros l. c. Dec. 1. L. 4. Cap. 2. Telles. Sylvius, De Rebus gestis Joannis II. (Hagae 1712), 99. Ut minore cum errandi periculo ignotum mare nauigari posset, Roderico et Josepho, medicis suis, nec non Martino Bohemo, ea aetate peritissimis mathematicis, iniunxit Joannes II. etc Matthaei, De insulis novi orbis (Francofurti 1590) 80: . . . . praeclaro sano invento ad usum rei maritimae opera peritissimorum mathematicorum Rotheri et Josephi etc. Maffei, Histor. Indicar. (Venet.) 51.



auch der König sie mit Undank belohnte und sie mit ihren Genossen im Glauben aus dem Lande gejagt hat.

Die Zeiten Manuels waren die des Aufschwungs der portugiesischen Nation, und der Enthusiasmus für Seefahrten und Entdeckungen ergriff die strebsamsten und thatendurstigsten Männer damals am allermächtigsten. Vasco de Gama ging unter Segel, Dias schloß sich ihm an, Meneses kämpfte siegreich in Afrika, Manuel wollte in eigener Person ein Heer gegen die Mauren führen, und der alte Azambuja, dieser schlaue, hinkende Greis, erntete auf mauritanischem Boden die herrlichsten Siegestriumphe.

Seine Triumphe und Eroberungen wollen wir nunmehr verfolgen. Wir begeben uns zunächst mit ihm nach der alten Küstenstadt Safi.

Diese Stadt, welche von den Mauren Azafi genannt wird und nach dem Berichte arabischer Schriftsteller von den Eingebornen in grauer Vorzeit angelegt worden ist, bestand zur Zeit, als Azambuja sich ihr näherte, aus vielen einzelnen Dörfern und Weilern und hatte über 4000 Feuerstellen (Fogos), von denen 400 Juden bewohnten.[1] Durch die jüdische Bevölkerung war Safi ein bedeutender Handelsplatz geworden und sowohl christliche als maurische Kaufleute führten die verschiedensten Erzeugnisse und Waaren, Gold und Silber, Honig, Wachs, Butter und Felle zu Wasser und zu Lande dorthin. Die Portugiesen benutzten Zwistigkeiten in der marokkanischen Regentenfamilie sich ihrer zu bemächtigen, durch Hülfe der Juden gelang es ihnen, sie in ihre Gewalt zu bekommen.

Mit nur wenigen Personen begab sich Azambuja nach Safi. Kaum hatte er den Ort betreten, so brachte er durch einen dort wohnenden Juden, einen Rabbi Abraham, welcher ihm als Dolmetscher diente[2], in Erfahrung, daß einige Bewohner der Stadt

[1] Damião de Goes, Chronica do Rei D. Manuel (Lisboa 1749), Fol. 186: allem de quatro centas casas que nella auia de Judeus. Leo Africanus, De totius Africae descriptione (Tiguri 1559), 120, meint: Azaphi . . . quamplurimos *olim* habuit Judaeos, qui et varias exercebant artes.

[2] Dam. de Goes, l. c. 187: porque soube per via do hum Judeu, per

ihm, dem berufenen Friedensſtifter, nach dem Leben trachteten. Die Ausſage des Rabbi wurde auch durch Andere beſtätigt, ſo daß der Feldherr in dem Moment der Gefahr es für das Gerathenſte hielt, vorläufig nach Caſtello-Real, ſeinem Ausgangspunkte, zurückzukehren. Doch ſchon am 6. Auguſt 1507 traf er, mit neuen Verhaltungsbefehlen von ſeinem Könige verſehen, in Begleitung des ihm zur Unterſtützung beigegebenen Garcia de Melo in Safi wieder ein. Jetzt wollte ſich keine der ſtreitenden Parteien mit Azambuja in Unterhandlungen einlaſſen. Azambuja ſann auf Mittel, die Stadt dem portugieſiſchen Scepter zu unterwerfen und griff zu dem eben ſo unedlen als wirkſamen — er ſtreute, wie der Chroniſt ſich ausdrückt, Unkraut zwiſchen die beiden ſich einander bekriegenden Parteiführer und Tyrannen, erregte gegenſeitiges Mißtrauen und bemächtigte ſich ſo der Stadt durch Liſt.

Garcia de Melo; Azambuja's Begleiter und Gefährte, lag im Lager krank darnieder, ein jüdiſcher Arzt, der auch Zutritt zu den beiden ſtreitenden Tyrannen hatte, wurde zu ihm aus der Stadt geholt. Dieſen ſuchten die portugieſiſchen Feldherren zu gewinnen, und der Jude ließ ſich als Vermittler gebrauchen. Sie beredeten ihn, den beiden Führern Briefe in einer ſolchen Weiſe zu überbringen, daß der eine von dem Schreiben des andern nichts erführe. Beide wurden von der Lebensgefahr benachrichtigt, welche ihnen von ihren Gegnern bevorſtehe, beiden wurde gerathen, ſich den portugieſiſchen Feldherren anzuvertrauen, jedem Einzelnen die Verſicherung gegeben, daß er als Vaſall Manuels gemeinſchaftlich mit dem von dieſem ernannten Gouverneur die Herrſchaft führen ſolle. Niemand außer den in dieſem ernſten Spiele handelnden Perſonen erfuhren von dieſer ſtrategiſchen Kunſt. So oft nämlich der Arzt den immer kranken

nome Rabi Abrahão que era sua lingoa que alguns dos dacidade andauam pera o matar, o que de feito era verdade etc. So auch Oſorius, De rebus Emmanuelis (Coloniae 1597), 138 b: Ibi vero cum indicio Abrahami Judaei cognovisset etc. Den hier in Frage ſtehenden Abraham mag auch Ribeiro dos Santos im Sinn gehabt haben, als er Memor. d. litt. Portugueza, VIII, 223 ſchrieb: Outro Abraham feito Rabi dos Judeos de Çafim.

Melo besuchte, legte er die Hand unter die Bettdecke, als ob er seinem Patienten den Puls fühlen wollte, aber statt nach dem Puls griff er nach den in seiner Abwesenheit von Melo fabricirten Briefen und entfernte sich schleunigst. Die Kriegslist gelang, Jeder der Führer ging in die gelegte Schlinge und Safi fiel.[1]

Diese Art Städte zu erobern und Länder zu gewinnen steht in der Geschichte nicht vereinzelt da, in jedem Kriege wiederholen sich ähnliche Fälle, und Portugiesen wie Franzosen, Deutsche und Engländer machten sich kein Gewissen daraus, sich in Kriegszeiten durch List und Schlauheit den Weg zu bahnen, List und Gewalt für Kriegskunst und Kriegsrecht gelten zu lassen. Wohl aber lassen sich nur wenige Beispiele anführen, daß Juden, immer und allenthalben die ihren Herrschern treuesten Unterthanen, sich dazu verstanden hätten, es mit dem Feinde zu halten. Der jüdische Arzt hatte das Wohl seiner Mitbürger, seiner Brüder im Auge: er wollte die Stadt von Tyrannen befreien und hoffte, daß die Portugiesen das alle Bewohner schwer drückende Joch abnehmen würden. Ob er seine Hoffnung in Erfüllung gehen sah? Die Geschichte schweigt davon und doch glauben wir Grund zu haben, es vermuthen zu dürfen.

So lange Safi unter portugiesischer Herrschaft stand, waren die Juden dieser Stadt gleich berechtigt und mit den übrigen Bewohnern gleich besteuert.

Safi blieb noch lange der Kampfplatz. Je wichtiger der Besitz dieser reichen Handelsstadt wegen ihres großen Verkehrs, aus welchem die Juden wie Christen und Mauren einen überaus reichen Gewinn zogen,[2] den Portugiesen gewesen, desto häufiger versuchten die Mauren sie ihnen zu entreißen. Nach der Einnahme war der greise Azambuja zum alleinigen Gouverneur ernannt; die aufrührerischen Mauren in Ruhe zu halten, gelang ihm nicht. 1511 hatte sich die ganze Provinz Duccala, deren Hauptstadt das mehrerwähnte Safi ist, gegen die fremden Er-

[1] Dam. de Goes l. c. 188; Osorius, l. c. 139 a.

[2] Dam. de Goes, l. c. 291: . . . grando trato de mercadorias que nella auia, de que assi os Christiãos, como os mouros e Judeus facião muitos e mui grossos ganhos.

oberer erhoben; ein Heer von 5000 Reitern und 600,000 Mann Fußvolk ſtand ſchlagfertig. In Eilmärſchen rückte der portugieſiſche Feldherr, der kluge Atayde gegen Safi; er ließ die Thore ſchließen und ertheilte den Wachpoſten den ausdrücklichen Befehl, keinem menſchlichen Weſen, weder Mauren, noch Juden, noch Chriſten den Ausgang ohne beſondere Erlaubniß[1] zu geſtatten. In kurzer Zeit dämpfte Atayde den Aufruhr, unterwarf die ganze Provinz und erhob einen Tribut von den Waaren, welche die Bewohner ohne Ausnahme, Mauren, Juden und Chriſten einführten.

Als die Marokkaner 28 Jahre ſpäter wiederum zu den Waffen griffen und der Fremden Herrſchaft abſchütteln wollten, leiſtete ein jüdiſcher Feldherr den Portugieſen Hülfe. Im Jahre 1539 erſchien nämlich der Xarife de Marocco mit einem Heere von 100,000 Mann vor Safi, bei welcher Gelegenheit einer der aus Spanien vertriebenen, nach Fez ausgewanderten Juden ein eclatantes Beiſpiel jüdiſcher Treue, jüdiſcher Tapferkeit lieferte. Samuel Valenciano (Al-Valenſi) iſt der Name dieſes jüdiſchen Feldherrn. Dieſer Held, welcher bei ſeiner Ankunft in Fez[2] ſich die Liebe und Achtung des damaligen Herrſchers aus der Familie der Merinen erworben, hatte ſchon vor Ceuta ſeinen Namen furchtbar gemacht. Später erhoben ſich die Xarifen gegen die Merinen und verjagten ſie aus dem Reiche. Die vom Throne geſtoßenen Fürſten begaben ſich unter portugieſiſchen Schutz. Sein Leben und Vermögen ſetzte der edle Samuel für die rechtmäßige Herrſcherfamilie aufs Spiel; er vereinigte ſich mit anderen den Merinen treu gebliebenen Alcaiden, rüſtete einige Schiffe aus, ſtellte ſich an die Spitze des Unternehmens und ſegelte dorthin ab, wo die Empörer den Portugieſen vielen Schaden verurſachten. Al-Valenſi landete mit ſeinen Schiffen vor Ceuta. Schnell ſetzte er ſeine Leute ans Land, wartete in der Nacht einen günſtigen Augenblick ab und ſtürzte ſich mit ſeiner kleinen Schaar, er hatte nicht mehr als 400 Mann, auf das feindliche Heer, welches über 30,000 Krieger zählte. Mehr

[1] Goes, l. c. 290: E defender aos porteiros e guardas que Mouro, nem Judeu, nem Christão deixassem sair fora sem seu mandado.

[2] Samuel ſoll ſich ſpäter in Azamor niedergelaſſen haben.

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als 5000 machte er nieder, ohne daß er einen einzigen Mann verlor. Ceuta wurde entſetzt und ehe noch der Morgen graute, zog ſich der Xarife nach Fez zurück.[1] Mit gleicher Tapferkeit, mit bewundernswürdiger Kühnheit und ſeltenem Geſchick brachte Al-Valenſi den vor Safi lagernden Feind zum Weichen und hob die Belagerung auf.[2]

Azamor wird als der ſpätere Wohnort dieſes tapfern jüdiſchen Helden angegeben; nach Azamor wollen wir die portugieſiſchen Eroberer begleiten.

Sie war, nur wenige Meilen von Fez entfernt, nächſt Safi die vornehmſte Stadt der Provinz Duceala. Lange vor der Einnahme von Safi durch die Portugieſen hielt König Manuel, um die Freundſchaft und den Frieden, welchen João mit den Mauren von Azamor geſchloſſen hatte, fortzuſetzen, einige vertraute Portugieſen in dieſer Stadt. Auf ihren Betrieb und mit Beihülfe eines

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[1] Tambien merea ser celebrada la fidelidad y valor de un noble Israelita, llamado Semuel Alualensi, de los desterrados de Espana: el qual, auiendo passado à Africa fue fauorecido y muy muz amado del Rey de Fez, que en aquel tiempo era de la familia de los Merines. Succedio que los Xarifes se lleuantaron contra los Merines, y los mataron y despojaron del Reyne. Fue tan grande el dolor del grato y fiel Semuel Alualensi, que poniendo su vida, hazienda, y todas sus cosas à manifiesto peligro, se junto con otros Alcaydes criados de los Merines, y armaron algunos nauios, tomando por Capitan al valeroso Alualensi, para hir contra los Xarifes, que estauan en aquel tiempo sobre la fortaleza de Cepta, y tenian muy afligidos à los Portuguezes vasallos del Rey D. Manuel que la defendian. Llegaron entonces los nauios de nuestro Alualensi al puerto de Cepta, y auiendo desembarcado la gente en tierra, espero tiempo oportuno de la noche, y con quatocientos Nombres deo sobre el ezercito del Xarife, que eran mas de treynta mil, y mataron mas de cinco mil dellos, sin perder uno solo de los suyos. Luego al otro dia als(z)o el Xarife el cerco y se retiro a Fez. Aboab, Nomologia (Amsterdam 1629) 305 f.

[2] El Tirano Xarife de Marruecos cerco à la ciudad de Safi en el anno de 1539 con cien mil hombres y el valiente Samuel Valenciano, Judio de Azamor, y Almirante de guerreros Vergantines, que formo à su costa, socorrio à los cercados Portuguezes, y con admirable industria, y audacia desbarato à los Mahometanos y descerco a la Ciudad. Barrios, Historia Universal Judayca, 8 f.

Rabbi der dortigen Juden, Namens Rabbi Abraham, geschah es 1512,[1] daß die Einwohner von Azamor durch Briefe und Verträge mit Zustimmung ihres Führers Mulei Zeyan sich dem König von Portugal unterwarfen. Nachdem Mulei Zeyan, welcher mit der größten Tyrannei herrschte, die Verträge mit Portugal mehrere Male gebrochen hatte, beschloß Manuel 1513 Azamor zu erobern. Zu diesem Zweck ließ er eine Flotte von mehr als 400 Segeln ausrüsten und übertrug seinem Neffen D. Jaime, Herzog von Bragança, den Oberbefehl; João de Menezes schloß sich mit mehreren seiner Söhne und vielen ruhmsüchtigen Grafen und Herren dem großen Zuge an.

Am 23. August ging D. Jaime unter Segel; schon nach wenigen Tagen erblickte er Azamor.

Diese Stadt gab Safi an Größe und Bedeutung nichts nach; sie trieb großen Handel und hatte über 5000 Feuerstellen, außer 400, welche von Juden bewohnt waren.[2]

Mit einer ansehnlichen Kriegsmacht rückte Mulei Zeyan, von seinen beiden Söhnen begleitet, den Portugiesen entgegen; er selbst hatte das Commando übernommen. D. Jaime ertheilte der Flotte die nöthigen Weisungen, schiffte das Geschütz aus und rückte mit dem ganzen Heere in geordnetem Zuge gegen die schlagfertigen Mauren. Es kam zum Kampf. Mit Löwenmuth vertheidigten sich die maurischen Krieger. Plötzlich erhob sich ein lautes Wehklagen in der Stadt; ihr tapferer Befehlshaber, welcher nicht allein mit seiner furchtbaren Stimme, sondern mit Händen und Füßen die Seinen zum Kampfe anfeuerte, der gepriesene Cide Mansus war von einer Bombarde niedergeworfen. Mit ihm war all ihr Muth geschwunden. Sie zogen aus der Stadt

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[1] Damião de Goes l. c. 367: Muito antes da tomada de Çafim por el Rey D. Manuel continuar nas pazes e amiza de etc. (Vgl. auch Schäfer, l. c. III, 119, welcher, wie wir, Goes übersetzt) . . . per medo dos quaes (cavallecros) *o de hum Rabi mor dos Judeos, per nome Rabi Abraham* (weshalb Schäfer den Rabbi nicht nennt, wissen wir nicht) etc.

[2] Damião de Goes, l. c. 370: em que aueria mais de cinco mil fogos, sem os dos Judeus, que serião *quatrocentos*, also nicht fünfhundert, wie Schäfer, l. c. III, 120 angibt.

und zwar in ſolcher Haſt, daß über 80 in den Thoren erdrückt wurden.

Ehe noch der Tag anbrach, ließ ſich von der Mauer des in Todesſtille verſunkenen Azamor eine Stimme vernehmen. Diego Berrio! Diego Berrio! Dem tapferſten Mann der portugieſiſchen Flotte galt dieſer Ruf. Es war die Stimme eines Freundes, eines alten Bekannten aus der Heimath, es war der Ruf des aus dem Vaterlande verjagten Juden Jacob Adibe. Ohne Verzug wollte Jacob zum Herzog geführt werden. Diego Berrio geleitete den Freund. Die Stadt iſt frei! Mit dieſen Worten fiel Jacob auf ſein Geſicht. Azamor iſt geräumt, o Herzog; Azamor iſt frei! Ich flehe um mein Leben und um das Leben meiner Brüder und Glaubensgenoſſen! D. Jaime hob den Juden auf, verſprach ihm Schutz und Erhaltung; er ſelbſt ſank nieder und dankte Gott für die Gnade, daß er ihn dieſe große und treffliche Stadt habe einnehmen laſſen, ohne Verluſt Derer, die mit ihm gezogen waren. Jacob Adibe hatte das Wort des Herzogs und kehrte freudig zu den Seinen zurück. Im portugieſiſchen Lager erhob man ein Siegesgeſchrei; mit entfalteten Fahnen zogen die Eroberer in Azamor ein und bald wehten portugieſiſche Banner von den goldenen Kuppeln der zahlreichen Moſcheen. Bewaffnete Mannſchaft wurde zum Schutz der Juden geſtellt,[1] und während das erſte Hochamt in der mauriſchen Stadt gehalten wurde, zogen die Juden ſammt ihrem

[1] Damião de Goes, l. c. 372: Despyada assi a cidade, sendo ainda noite, hum Judeu de naçam Portuguez, per nome Jacob Adibe, dos que se foram deste regno, que ahi era morador, chamou derriba do muro Diogo Berrio ete O Duque fez aleuantar o Judeu . . . . . e ao Judeo concedeo o que lhe pedio etc. . . Entrassem na cidade e com elle o corregedor pera defender os Judeus que os nam roubassem . . . . Osorius, l. c. 254b: Antiquam dilusesceret Judaeus quidam, nomine Jacobus Adibius, natione Lusitanus, qui cum reliquis Judaeis in exilium pulsus fuerat, e muris Jacobum (muß heißen Diegum) Berrium etc. Auch Barrios erwähnt des Jacob Adibe (Historia Universal Judayca 13): Jacob Adibe, en Azamor ciudad de Africa dio las alegres nuevas de como la havian desamparado sus temenosos Moradores a Don Jaime Duque de Bragança, sobrino del Rey D. Manuel.

Vermögen aus, nach Sale und Fez, um nicht ferner mit Menschen zusammen zu wohnen, welche, wie der maurisch-christliche Johannes meint,[1] den Verlust der Freiheit durch das gräßlichste Verbrechen sich zugezogen hatten.

Der Einnahme von Azamor folgte im nächsten Jahre die Eroberung der Stadt Tedneſt, in welcher die Portugieſen 1600 Häuſer fanden, von denen 100 den Juden gehörten.[2] Dort lebten ſie als Künſtler, frei von allen Steuern. Nur den Adligen ſchickten ſie zuweilen Geſchenke, um ſich ihrer Gunſt zu verſichern.

Manuels Name war in der Berberei bald ſo gefürchtet und geliebt, daß viele Mauren, müde der Tyrannei ihrer Herren, aus freien Stücken Tributpflichtige des Königs wurden.

Manuel der Glückliche ſtarb. Unter João III. ſank die Macht des Reiches; die Inquiſition wurde eingeführt — die Beſitzungen in Afrika gingen wieder verloren.

Die Portugieſen wurden aus der Berberei verjagt; die Juden weilen noch heute dort. Ihre damaligen Zuſtände werden wir ein anderes Mal kennen lernen. Nach Malabar und der malabariſchen Küſte wollen wir uns mit den portugieſiſchen Entdeckern zunächſt begeben und für heute mit dem beliebteſten deutſchen Dichter der Gegenwart ſchließen:

Die ganze Welt iſt wie ein Buch,
Darin uns aufgeſchrieben
In bunten Zeilen manch ein Spruch,
Wie Gott uns treu geblieben.

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[1] Leo Africanus, l. c. 129: . . . Judaei vero partim Salae et partim Fessae adierunt regionem. Nec puto aliam ob causam id illis a Deo Opt. Max. fuisse illatum, quam propter horrendum illud Sodomitarum crimen, cui ciuium pars maxima tam fuit addicta, ut juvenem vix non corruptum a se demitterent.

[2] Damião de Goes, l. c. 275, übereinſtimmend mit Leo Africanus, l. c. 70.

Schluß.

Mit meiner Rückkehr nach Europa (April 1855) hätte ich meine Reiseberichte zu schließen. Wie grell auch manchmal die Farben des Gemäldes waren, welches ich vor den Augen des geneigten Lesers entrollte, wie düster ihm auch oft die Verhältnisse erscheinen mochten, mit denen mein Buch ihn bekannt machte — ich bin mir bewußt, nach gewissenhafter, redlicher Ueberzeugung berichtet zu haben; wo ich vielleicht geirrt, da war ich thatsächlich im Irrthum, dem jeder Mensch ausgesetzt ist; wissentlich geirrt habe ich nirgend. Ich habe in dem Menschen stets den Bruder erblickt, habe in ihm stets das Ebenbild Gottes erkannt, wie groß auch die Entartung war, in welcher ich ihn getroffen. Weder eine vorgefaßte gute noch böse Meinung hat bei Beurtheilung irgend eines Gegenstandes Sitz und Stimme in meinem Rathe gehabt.

Wenn ich auch hier und da den geistigen Zustand meines Volkes, der Juden, im trüben Lichte erscheinen ließ — habe ich nöthig zu versichern, daß mein Herz in nicht geringerer Liebe ihnen entgegenschlug? habe ich nöthig zu versichern, daß ich nur der Wahrheit die Ehre gegeben, in jeder jüdischen Seele aber den eigensten Bruder, den Sohn unseres Vaters Abraham, den gleichberechtigten Erben an dem großen, heiligen Kleinod, der Thora, erblickt habe, die Gott der Gesammtheit Israels und damit einem jeden von einer jüdischen Mutter Gebornen anvertraut hat?

Möge dem Reisenden, der aus fernen entlegenen Ländern zurückgekehrt ist zu dem Boden, wo seine Wiege stand, und der das Haus trägt, in welchem seine Kinder weilen, während der Vater durch dürre Wüsten oder unwirthbare Gebirge seinen Weg sucht, möge es dem Reisenden, der schon wieder beinahe ganz gerüstet ist zur weiteren langen Reise, möge es ihm verstattet sein auch seine europäischen Brüder auf einen Gegenstand ihrer eigenen inneren Verhältnisse aufmerksam zu machen. Ich wende mich zunächst an meine Brüder in Polen, Rußland und der Moldau. Keiner von ihnen kann mit größerer Begeisterung den Gottesschatz, unser heiliges Gesetz, hoch emporhalten, als das höchste, unschätz-

barste, einzige Gut, das in Wahrheit das Heil und den Frieden auf Erden zu begründen und zu sichern im Stande ist; keiner kann mit innigerer, tieferer Ueberzeugung die Lehre: Du sollst Tag und Nacht der Beschäftigung mit dem Gesetze obliegen, beherzigen, als wie ich die Bedeutung des Gesetzes erfasse und ihm mit ganzem Herzen und ganzer Seele anhange.

Aber eben um dieses Gesetzes willen dürfen wir unser Ohr nicht verschließen dem allgemeinen Wissen. Jofe thalmud thora im derech erez, Gesetzeskunde muß mit allgemeiner Bildung Hand in Hand gehen, lehren unsere Weisen und wahrlich nicht umsonst nennen wir sie unsere Weisen. — Schlagen wir ihre Lehren nach; kein Feld des Wissens finden wir, in welchem sie nicht zu Hause waren. Wie könnte es auch anders sein? Ist ja die Thora kein Mysterium und keine Pfaffenlehre, ist sie ja der Ausspruch des lebendigen allmächtigen Vaters und Königs des Universums; dürfte da ein Winkel in diesem Universum sein, wohin das Gotteswort nicht zu dringen hätte, dessen Gegenwart gar dem göttlichen Gesetze schädlich sein könnte? Wenn niemals, so am wenigsten jetzt, wo überall, und auch in den oben genannten Ländern der finstere Geist des Vorurtheils zu weichen beginnt und der Jude in freierer Stellung eintritt in die Reihen seiner nichtjüdischen Brüder, wo also nicht mehr die Macht der Gewohnheit so kräftig wirken kann, und wo der lockenden Verführung mehr als früher Thür und Thor geöffnet ist, dürfen wir das kommende Geschlecht unbekannt lassen mit den Kenntnissen, die der Geist des Menschen erworben, daß unsere Kinder der Stimme einer vermeintlichen Klugheit und Bildung ohne Schutz ausgesetzt seien. Müssen wir sie nicht ganz besonders ausrüsten mit aller und jeder Wissenschaft und Culturfeinheit, und ihnen zeigen, was Göttliches, Reines hierin enthalten und was davon Irrthum und Menschenwahn sei?

Jofe thalmud thora im derech erez. Thora und Bildung, so muß noch heute die Inschrift auf unserer Standarte lauten, dann wird unsere Jugend bei der Fahne des väterlichen Heiligthums ausharren, wie sie aushielt, als griechische Cultur und Bildung die Herrschaft hatten.

Wie ich dazu komme, diese alte Lehre meinen Brüdern zu-

zurufen, was mich dazu veranlaßt? — Ich bin ein Kind eben jener Gegend, wo man diese hochwichtige Lehre übersehen hat, und ich erfuhr und erfahre schmerzlich — ich gestehe es offen — den ganzen Mangel, der daraus erwachsen. Ich sehe mich in Deutschland und Frankreich um; auch hier, wo Wahrheit und Recht um mehr als ein halbes Jahrhundert früher zur Geltung kam, hatte man diese Lehre vergessen und glaubte thöricht, sich gänzlich abschließen zu können gegen europäische Wissenschaft. — Was war die Folge? daß Jeder, der Bildung anstrebte, sich gleichsam außerhalb der Gemeinde Israels betrachten mußte, und wenn nicht in neuerer Zeit der Herr die Augen der treuen Juden geöffnet hätte, man von diesen Ländern hätte sagen müssen: thora nischkachath, das Gesetz sei gänzlich vergessen.

Wo man aber diesen Grundsatz beherzigt, da blüht in schönster Entfaltung Gesetzeskunde und Gesetzesanhänglichkeit mit Bildung zusammen aus einem Boden hervor, und das jüngere Geschlecht hängt fest an dem väterlichen Glauben, ohne gegen die übrigen Bürger an Bildung zurückstehen zu müssen.

Mögen so unsere russischen, polnischen und moldauischen Brüder von Deutschland und Frankreich lernen, wie sehr sich die Außerachtlassung der genannten Lehre rächt und welche herrliche Früchte deren Befolgung trägt. Und mit diesem Wunsche nehme ich Abschied vom Leser.

Capitel 44.

Nachdem ich im Jahre 1856 die französische Ausgabe meines Reisewerkes veröffentlicht hatte, forderte ich, um der Wissenschaft nützen zu können, französische und deutsche Gelehrte und Orientalisten auf, mir für meine demnächstige zweite Reise Instructionen und Anhaltspunkte zu geben, da mir der Mangel derselben bei

meiner ersten Reise fühlbar wurde. Ich erhielt darauf die nachfolgenden Notizen, welche ich deshalb hier mittheile, um vielleicht einem andern Reisenden dadurch nützlich sein zu können, oder falls sie mir selbst verloren gingen, derselben nicht gänzlich entbehren zu müssen.

A. Allgemeine Fragen und Aufgaben von Dr. Munk in Paris, vom 14. September 1856.

1. Im Allgemeinen.

a. Die Herbeischaffung eines vollständigen, geschriebenen, für eine Völkerschaft geeigneten und von ihr selbst gemachten Kalenders, oder mindestens einer genauen Abschrift desselben, oder eines ausführlichen Berichtes darüber, worin vornehmlich dargestellt ist, ob nach Mond- oder Sonnenmonaten gezählt wird, resp. ob die Mondjahre astronomisch oder nach dem Mondwechsel bestimmt werden.

b. Die Angabe einer Aera, von welcher die übliche Zeitrechnung angefangen.

c. Bericht über Festtage, deren Bedeutung und Namen.

d. Bericht über Gebete, wenn möglich Anschaffung eines Gebetbuches, mindestens authentische Abschriften davon. Uebersetzung derselben, vornehmlich ins Arabische. Genaue Untersuchung der Schrift und Vergleichung derselben mit phönizischen, samaritanischen, alt- und neuhebräischen Lettern. Untersuchung, ob Spuren hebräischer Sprache in den Gebeten vorkommen, z. B. wie der Name Gottes lautet. Angaben über den Glauben an Engel resp. deren Bezeichnung; über die Unsterblichkeit der Seele; über ihre Kirchhöfe und Anfertigung einer genauen Copie von Grabschriften.

e. Bericht über andere geschriebene Religionsbücher resp. Anschaffung der Originale oder authentischer Abschriften, oder einer Uebersetzung derselben.

f. Bericht über etwa vorhandene Kenntniß biblischer Schriften, ob vollständig, auszugs- oder bruchweise. In dieser Hinsicht hauptsächlich nach Schriftstücken zu forschen.

g. Bericht über Sitten und Gebräuche. Nachforschung nach geschriebenen Gesetzen, in welcher Zeit und von wem dieselben gegeben. Womöglich ausführliche Auskunft über Speise- und Rei-

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nigungsgesetze, wobei namentlich die im Pentateuch angeführten Thier- und Pflanzennamen im Auge zu halten sind, wie auch die auf die Nidda bezüglichen Vorschriften der heiligen Schrift.

h. Bericht über Ehegesetze und Ehegebräuche, ob Polygamie üblich, ob Chaliza und Ehecontracte eingeführt sind. Womöglich Anschaffung von Scheidebriefen in Originalen oder doch in authentischen Abschriften.

2. Im Speciellen.

a. Die Bene-Israel. Genaue Untersuchung ihrer Abstammung, ob sie ursprüngliche Juden, oder nur bekehrte Heiden sind, wie z. B. die Hazaren waren. — Haben sie außer der bekannten und schon erwähnten Malabarischen Chronik noch andere Schriften historischen Inhalts, von welchen genaue Abschriften zu machen sind? — Ausführlicher Bericht über ihre Geschichte ꝛc.

b. Die Juden in China. Möglichst ausführlicher Bericht.

c. Die Juden in Afghanistan. Allgemeiner Bericht, besonders über die Gebet- und Landessprache, ihre Gebräuche ꝛc.

d. Die Juden in Persien. Allgemeiner Bericht. Forschung nach Handschriften mit hebräischen Buchstaben, nach einer persischen Bibelübersetzung. (Die in Paris vorgefundenen Handschriften sind in Lar im Anfange des 17. Jahrhunderts geschrieben, eine ist datirt von Dogrun di al jama raba mothuya.)

e. Die Juden in Kurdistan. Allgemeiner Bericht, besonders über ihre Gebetsprache; wenn keine Schriften vorhanden, über die Uebersetzung der Bibel in ihre Landessprache; über Ehecontracte und Scheidebriefe.

f. Die Juden in Arabien. Allgemeiner Bericht, besonders über arabische Handschriften mit hebräischen Lettern, deren Anschaffung; namentlich in Yemen Handschriften, Bibelcommentare von Rabbi Tarchum aus Jerusalem; Kutiath zur Bibel. — Ausführlicher Bericht über die von dem Reisenden in seinem Werke „Cinq années de voyage en Orient“ erwähnte Bibel in Diarbekir, die der Aussage der dortigen Israeliten zufolge von Esra eigenhändig geschrieben sein soll, und über den in demselben Werke erwähnten Pentateuch in Kefil, welcher dem Propheten Hesekiel zugeschrieben wird.

B. Hinweisungen von Hrn. Goldberg in Paris, vom 20. Juli 1856.

a. In dem ehemaligen Mesopotamien und Assyrien ein Vergleichungsstudium über die Städte- und Ortschaftsnamen vorzunehmen, diese Namen auf Hebräisch und Arabisch mit der größten Genauigkeit niederzuschreiben.

b. Hauptsächlich authentische Schriften aufzusuchen, sowohl vollständige wie auch Bruchstücke. Es giebt davon drei Klassen:

1) Biblische. Die Pentateuche und alte Bibeln, vollständiger Text; einige Apokryphen, die zur Zeit der Talmudisten schon vorhanden, als: Ben Sira, Ben Toglath, Ben Lanath, vielleicht auch noch unbekannte, etwa Bruchstücke von Joseph dem Historiker, in dort vielleicht aufzufindenden Targumim.
2) Talmudische. Alle talmudische Schriften, weil darunter sich uns ganz unbekannte vorfinden können, wie z. B. der Talmud Jeruschalmi von Seder Kadaschim, welcher zur Zeit Maimonides noch vorhanden war, oder die Tosiphta von Bar-Karpara, die Fabeln des Rabbi Meïr u. dgl. m.
3) Geoninische, in chaldäischer und arabischer Schrift, welche Klasse sehr zahlreich ist, z. B. der berühmte R. Scharira, dessen Sohn R. Hai, R. Samuel ben Haphni, R. Hephetz ben Jaßlia u. s. w. Vielleicht auch Schriften der Gegner der Talmudisten, z. B. der Caraiten, und Gegner der Bibel, z. B. Hevy al Balhi, Ben Sakoni, die zur Zeit des Sadia lebten u. s. w.

c. Beobachtung und Untersuchung der Naturerzeugnisse und Geräthe, genaue Auskunft über ihre Benennungen. Forschung nach Inschriften, die vielleicht bis zur ältesten Periode reichen und Abschriften hiervon.

C. Bemerkung von Dr. Derenbourg in Paris, vom 16. September 1856.

Es wäre zu wünschen, daß der Reisende in Zana (Osel der Bibel) und der Umgegend hingaritische Inschriften, deren es dort sehr viele giebt, genau abzeichne, theils um die von Arnaud gegebenen zu controliren, theils um dieselben zu vermehren und zu vervollständigen.

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D. Bemerkung von Hrn. Landau in Paris, vom 21. September 1856.

Frage: Ob eine bestimmte Angabe über die Messiaszeit in der Volkstradition vorhanden, worauf dieselbe gegründet ist; läßt sie sich möglicherweise auf die Thora zurückführen?

E. Bemerkungen von Dr. Jost in Frankfurt a. M.

a. Ermittelungen über die ältesten Geonim und über deren Schriften.

b. Ueber deren Stellung zum Khalifat, insbesondere über die Rosche Galuth.

c. Ueber die ältesten Karaim: Joseph ben Noha, Nissim ben Noha, (Hawandi) Benjamin, Joschejaha, Anan, Levy, Japheth, auch über Japhet ben Said, Joseph hamaor, Jacob harkasni.

d. Ueber die Wohnorte und Familienzahlen der Karaim.

e. Ueber vorzufindende Handschriften derselben, besonders arabische.

f. Ueber die Secte der Shabathai Zeby, ihre Sitten, ihren Gottesdienst, ihre Schriften.

Unter den alten gedruckten Werken giebt es viele, die durch spätere Zuthaten sehr entstellt sind; die Auffindung von alten Handschriften könnte uns auf die Spur führen, den ursprünglichen Text wiederherzustellen. Dazu rechne ich vorzüglich das „Targum Jeruschalmi", auch unter dem Namen des „Jonathan" gedruckt; die „Mechiltha", den „Sifre" (zu den zwei letzten Büchern der Thora). Durch die Gewinnung derartiger Handschriften würde Herr Benjamin der Wissenschaft gute Dienste leisten.

Noch vor etwa 300 Jahren war der arabische Commentar des Saadias zum Pentateuch vorhanden; er müßte sich noch in Aegypten oder Persien finden.

Breslau, 22. Juni 1858. Geiger.

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1) Bei der großen Bedeutsamkeit, welche die chaldäische Sprache und Literatur für das Verständniß gewisser Partien der assyrischen und altbabylonischen Keil-Inschriften gewonnen hat, muß ein jeder Beitrag zur näheren Kenntniß der ersteren von größtem Interesse sein.

a) Wenn daher die Behauptung des Herrn Benjamin richtig ist, daß in den Gebirgen von Kurdistan noch heut zu Tage das Chaldäische (nicht etwa das Neusyrische, vgl. Rödiger in der Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft Bd. 2, S. 77 ff.) von den dortigen Juden gesprochen wird, so wäre zu wünschen, daß Herr B. — in Ermangelung von geschriebenen Literaturwerken — mündlich cursirende Literaturstücke, wie Sagen, Erzählungen, Lieder u. dgl. m. möglichst genau, unter allen Umständen aber mit Hinzufügung einer Vocalbezeichnung (der hebräischen, syrischen und arabischen) von einem dortigen jüdischen Gelehrten aufschreiben ließe.

b) Aus demselben Grunde hätte Hr. B. nach guten alten (vorzüglich vocalisirten) Handschriften der verschiedenen Targumim — die jerusalemischen Targuma zum Pentateuch nicht zu vergessen — sich umzusehen.

2) Nicht minder dankenswerth würde es sein, wenn Hr. B. auch der samaritanischen Literatur seine Aufmerksamkeit zuwenden, im Besondern die Erwerbung von guten Handschriften, theils des mit samaritanischer Schrift geschriebenen hebräischen Pentateuchs der Samaritaner, so wie der samaritanischen Paraphrase desselben, theils anderer in arabischer (oder in samaritanischer?) Sprache verfaßter Literaturwerke dieses Volkes, sei es exegetischen, sei es geschichtlichen oder grammatischen Inhalts, sich angelegen sein lassen wollte.

3) Gute handschriftliche Texte, welche die biblischen Lesarten theils des Madinchai und Maarbai, theils des Ben Asher und Ben Naphtali enthielten, so wie eigen und ohne Künsteleien geschriebene Masoren (gleichviel ob in Bibelhandschriften oder als eigene Werke, namentlich das Buch Ochla Weoohla) dürften gleichfalls die Beachtung des Reisenden verdienen.

Breslau, 16. Juni 1858. Dr. C. J. Magnus.

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Für die genauere Kenntniß der persischen Sprache wäre es wichtig, Nachrichten über die in den verschiedenen Provinzen herrschenden Dialecte zu haben. Um die aus den Grammatiken nur unvollständig zu ersehende Aussprache genau kennen zu lernen, würde ich vorschlagen, daß ein längerer persischer Text gewählt, und dessen Aussprache in den verschiedenen Provinzen nach der in ihnen herrschenden Aussprache sorgfältig mit lateinischen Buchstaben niedergeschrieben würde.

Breslau, den 22. Juni 1858.

Stenzler.

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1) In Jerusalem auf dem Haram befinden sich zwei große und zwei kleine Moscheen. Die eine auf der Mitte des Platzes stehende ist die berühmte Omars-Moschee oder auch Felsenkuppel genannt. Die andere große Moschee steht am südlichen Theile, war früher eine von Justinian erbaute christliche Kirche, an die sich die zwei anderen kleinen Moscheen anschließen und ist ein herrliches Gebäude aus sieben Schiffen bestehend. In den Beschreibungen christlicher Reisenden wird sie mehrfach die Aksâ genannt, während einige arabische Schriftsteller jene Omar-Moschee Aksâ nennen. Es wäre wünschenswerth, wenn ermittelt würde, welche von beiden Moscheen die Aksâ heißt.

2) W. J. Hamilton hat einige Nachrichten über die für die Kunstgeschichte höchst wichtigen Ruinen der ehemaligen Stadt Ani (an der türkisch-russisch-persischen Grenze, fünf geographische Meilen östlich von Kars) gegeben. Hamilton's Berichte machen jedoch eine genauere Kenntniß der herrlichen Ruinen nur noch mehr wünschenswerth. Die neuesten Reisenden scheinen diese Ruinen gar nicht besucht zu haben. Eine möglichst genaue Beschreibung dieser Denkmäler würde für die Geschichte wie für die Kunst höchst verdienstvoll sein.

3) Durch Layard ist die Aufmerksamkeit auf die in der Nähe Mossuls lebenden Jezidis gelenkt worden. Ihre sonderbaren religiösen Ansichten und merkwürdiger Cultus scheinen auf ein hohes heidnisches Alterthum hinzudeuten. Es würde daher

großes Interesse gewähren, wenn auch andere Reisenden der Religion, den Glaubenslehren, dem Cultus und den Sagen der Jezidis ihre Aufmerksamkeit zuwenden wollten.

4) Schon d'Herbelot hat in der biblioth. Orient. eine Notiz über das Buch Gafr, ein bei häretischen Schiiten verbreitetes Werk, welches für die Religionsgeschichte des Islam höchst wichtig sein müßte. Sollten sich nicht, besonders in Kurdistan, genauere Nachrichten darüber oder gar das Buch selbst auffinden lassen?

Schmölders.

Zeitschrift für allgemeine Erdkunde, S. 149: Wir wünschen vom ethnographischen Standpunkte, daß der Reisende noch die kleine Mühe auf sich nehme, in Luristan unter den Tadschiks und in den persisch-indischen Grenzländern Sprachliches zu sammeln, mögen es Lieder oder nur kleine Phraseologien sein. Luristan ganz besonders möchten wir seiner Aufmerksamkeit empfohlen haben, das ganze Reiseunternehmen aber der förderlichsten Theilnahme der Geographen und der geographischen Vereine.

R. Gosche.

Nachdem ich in Frankreich die vorstehenden Instructionen erhalten hatte, begab ich mich nach Holland, und zunächst nach Rotterdam. Dort wurde ich mit dem reichen Kaufmanne und Gemeindevorsteher L. L. Jacobsohn bekannt, der mich unter Zustimmung anderer einflußreicher Männer aufforderte, eine Reise nach niederländisch Ostindien (Java) zu unternehmen, um dort eine jüdische Gemeinde zu stiften, welche bis jetzt, trotz der nicht unbedeutenden Anzahl von Glaubensgenossen, dort nicht existirt. Obgleich diese Reise für mich nicht zu weit war, die Kosten jedoch bedeutend sind, so legte ich die Sache den Oberrabbinern von Rotterdam und Haag vor, welche dann in folgender Schrift die Angelegenheit der jüdischen Hauptcommission vortrug.

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Die unterzeichneten Ober-Rabbiner der israelitischen Hauptsynagogen zu Rotterdam und Haag haben die Ehre, in Folge eines an sie gerichteten Gesuches von Herrn Israel Joseph Benjamin II. betreffend seine im Interesse der Israeliten fortzusetzenden Reisen im Orient, der resp. Hauptcommission für Angelegenheiten der Israeliten in den Niederlanden, das hierbei angeschlossene Memoire zuzusenden, das nicht nur als Beweis ihres lebhaften Interesses an diesen Reisen und deren vermuthlichen Resultaten, sondern auch als nachdrückliche Fürsprache dienen soll zur Unterstützung und Begünstigung des oben genannten weit bekannten Reisenden in seiner beabsichtigten Ueberfahrt nach den niederländischen Besitzungen in Ostindien.

Rotterdam und Haag, Jjar 5617 (Mai 1857).

gez. B. S. Berenstein,
O.-R. d. süd. Gem. zu Haag.
Jb. van Jb. Ferares,
O.-R. d. portug. süd. Gem. zu Haag.
Dr. J. Jsaacsohn,
O.-R. zu Rotterdam.

An
die Hauptcommission für die Angelegenheiten
der Israeliten in den Niederlanden
zu Haag.

Memoire.

Bei Jedem, der der Geschichte der Ansiedelungen unserer Glaubensgenossen in den gastfreundlichen Niederlanden seine Aufmerksamkeit zuwendet, verdient die enge Verbindung und Errichtung unserer Glaubensgenossenschaft in ihren transatlantischen Colonien besondere Berücksichtigung. Die erste Niederlassung der Israeliten in den Niederlanden trifft beinahe mit der Entdeckung von Amerika zusammen, und kaum kamen die Niederlande einige Zeit nachher in den Besitz der bedeutenden Colonien in Westindien, wie man sie nannte, so wußte sich schon der damalige Unter-

nehmungsgeist der niederländischen Israeliten diesen Umstand zu Nutze zu machen, um nach diesen Gegenden ihre Handelsbeziehungen und Reichthümer auszudehnen. Wie dies den Wohlstand der Gemeinden daselbst beförderte, und welchen günstigen Einfluß es im allgemeinen auf die Colonien hatte, ist zur Genüge bekannt. In späteren Jahren ward es ein Gegenstand der Untersuchung, warum die damaligen so einsichtsvollen Gelehrten und Kaufleute nicht auch auf die Vortheile bedacht waren, die von den noch mehr ersprießlichen ostindischen Colonien zu ziehen waren. Wahrscheinlich zögerten sie wegen ihrer bekannten Anhänglichkeit an die vorelterliche Lehre und gottesdienstlichen Verrichtungen, Vorschriften und Gebräuche, die sie bei der größeren Entfernung nicht glaubten ausüben zu können. Indeß begaben sich von Zeit zu Zeit einzelne Abenteurer, meist von geringem Stande, als Matrosen oder dergleichen Subjecte dorthin, diesen gebrach es aber sowohl an Fähigkeiten und Kenntnissen, als an rechtem Sinn für Religion, um je nur an eine Einrichtung religiöser Art zu denken. Auch durfte bei dem Mangel an sittlicher und religiöser Bildung solcher Abenteurer jeder Versuch zur Herstellung irgend einer gottesdienstlichen Stiftung weder auf Gelingen noch auf bleibenden Bestand rechnen, weil ihnen alles Zutrauen abging. Man hielt es für vergeblich, eine Summe von Belang auf Anschaffung selbst der nothwendigsten Einrichtungen, als eine erste Vorrichtung für das Bestehen einer israelitischen kirchlichen Vereinigung zu verwenden, aus Furcht vor Entweihung der kleineren Gebräuche, die der Israelit mit besonderer Verehrung und Sorgfalt auszuführen verpflichtet ist. Doch seit den letzten Jahren, wo die Uebersendung der Mittel bedeutend erweitert und bequemer geworden ist, fängt der Wunsch, die Glaubensfahne unter unseren Religionsgenossen in jenen Gegenden aufzupflanzen, allmälig mehr rege zu werden an. Nicht nur von einem wissenschaftlichen und philanthropischen, sondern auch von einem materiellen und commerciellen Gesichtspunkte aus, ja selbst durch flachen Eigennutz erweckt, begannen einige unserer niederländischen Glaubensbrüder die Vortheile davon einzusehen und selbst das Bedürfniß danach zu fühlen. Jedoch blieb es immer nur bei den frommen Wünschen, weil noch niemand die Angelegenheiten zur ernsten Erwägung und bestimmten

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Behandlung gebracht hat, und zwar wegen der Schwierigkeit, geeignete Personen zu finden, die solcher Sendung fähig und würdig wären, und denen man solche mit der Aussicht auf gewünschten Erfolg anvertrauen dürfte. — Die Erscheinung aber eines Mannes von umfassender Kenntniß der israelitischen Lehre und Literatur, welcher gegenwärtig in den Niederlanden sich befindet, und die Absicht hat, seine Reisen im fernen Orient, die er bereits mit ausgezeichneter Umsicht und Selbstverleugnung gemacht hat, nunmehr zu wiederholen, um seine der israelitischen Geschichte so wichtigen Entdeckungen noch ungemein zu vermehren — diese Erscheinung hat jetzt, außer dem Interesse für seine höchst löbliche Unternehmung, und außer der Lust zur Begünstigung seiner wissenschaftlichen Reise, noch in hohem Maße jenen Wunsch vergrößert, nämlich einen Zweig unserer Kirchengemeinschaft in den so sehr bedeutenden östlichen transatlantischen Besitzungen der Niederlande zu begründen. Auch wir sind von demselben Wunsche durchdrungen und es freut uns sehr, daß dieser Wunsch im Interesse der Wissenschaft und der Religion mit bereitwilliger Theilnahme an der Beförderung des Planes dieses edlen Unternehmers unter unseren Glaubensbrüdern allgemeinen Anklang gefunden hat. — Als Geistliche fühlen wir uns besonders bewogen, den Wunsch so vieler unserer Gemeindeglieder zu befürworten, und unsere Mitwirkung anzubieten, um die Hülfe unserer menschenfreundlichen Regierung in Anspruch zu nehmen. Die Unterstützung, die aus der Colonialkasse allen gemeinnützigen materiellen und moralischen Unternehmungen gewährt wird, giebt uns Anlaß, die Freiheit zu nehmen, dieselbe auch für die in Rede stehende Unternehmung zu beanspruchen; insbesondere können wir die gegenwärtige so glückliche Erscheinung zu möglicher Erfüllung unseres vielseitig gehegten Wunsches nicht vorbeigehen lassen, ohne dessen Verwirklichung unserer hohen Regierung inständigst zu empfehlen.

Wir nehmen zu diesem Ende uns die Freiheit, in gedrängter Kürze unsere Ansicht über die Vortheile und das Bedürfniß des bezweckten Gegenstandes zu Ihrer Beachtung zu bringen, und wenn diese Ihren Beifall erringen sollte, wird es Ihrer tiefen Einsicht gewiß leicht sein, die Mittel zur Erreichung unseres Zweckes der hohen Regierung anzuweisen.

1. Ist unser unauslöschliches Gefühl für unsere Religion gewichtige Triebfeder genug, um zur Genehmigung unserer Vorstellung zu bewegen. Warum sollen wir zurückstehen gegen andere Kirchengenossenschaften, die so viel und vieles anwenden zur Erhaltung und Ausbreitung ihres Glaubens? Zwar hat die israelitische Kirche nicht die Pflicht der Proselytenmacherei, wie sie die andern sich stellen, jedoch dürfen wir gar nicht gleichgiltig dagegen sein, wenn so viele unserer israelitischen Brüder umherirren, ohne irgend eine Religionsvereinigung, so daß ihre Religion ganz oder doch größtentheils in ihnen erlischt. Wir haben es daher als heilige Pflicht betrachtet, die gegenwärtige Gelegenheit als Mittel zur Abwendung dieses Uebelstandes in Vorschlag zu bringen. Wir werden der hohen Regierung die beträchtlichen Kosten zur Begründung einer Synagoge in Java keineswegs zumuthen, so lange nicht die Gewißheit eines günstigen Resultats besteht. Jedoch für die Sendung, die Herr Benjamin II. übernehmen wollte, ohne eine bestimmte Unterstützung und spätere Belohnung zu verlangen, wäre wohl eine freie Ueberfahrt und eine mäßige Entschädigung zu gewähren; denn diese geringen Kosten wird gewiß ein Versuch zur Verbesserung des religiösen Zustandes der Israeliten werth sein, und darf daher deren Gewährung auf Grund der Gleichstellung mit anderen Kirchengenossenschaften wohl erwartet werden.

2. Die Beförderung philanthropischer Zwecke verdient als Motiv auch zur Beherzigung unserer Vorstellung beachtet zu werden, da diese doch vorzüglich unter der kirchlichen Leitung zu erreichen sind. Beförderung des religiösen Sinnes und Ausbreitung der Gotteserkenntniß sind unentbehrlich, um die Sittlichkeit der Gesellschaft nur einigermaßen zu sichern. Vorzüglich bei den dort wohnenden Europäern stellt sich das Bedürfniß an sittlichen Einflüssen und kräftigen Mitteln heraus, um die menschlichen Leidenschaften zu zügeln und der Sittenlosigkeit Schranken zu setzen. — Die Regierung selbst scheint dies zu begreifen und deshalb die Kirchenstiftungen dort zu befördern und über das Bestehen der Kirchen zu wachen. In den Colonien scheint das Princip der Trennung zwischen Kirche und Staat noch nicht in Anwendung gebracht zu sein, da sich hier das Gebiet der Regierung mehr als im Mutterlande über Unterricht und Sittlichkeit ausdehnt. Unter

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ihrer Beaufsichtigung üben die kirchlichen Autoritäten directen Einfluß auf diese gewichtigen Interessen der Gesellschaft aus. Hat also die israelitische Kirche nicht auch gerechten Anspruch, als ein ansehnlicher Theil der niederländischen Bevölkerung gleichen Schutz zu beanspruchen? Ist es nicht mit der Billigkeit übereinstimmend, daß die Bekenner unseres Glaubens eine Einrichtung besitzen, die besonders die Interessen ihrer Religion beaufsichtigt? Besteht nicht bei dem Mangel an solcher Aufsicht die gegründete Furcht eines nachtheiligen Einflusses anderer dort bestehenden Kirchen auf das Gemüth unserer Glaubensgenossen? Wenn sie auch nicht zu völliger Irreligiösität entarten, sind sie doch der Verleitung der Missionäre ausgesetzt, die bei ihrem verrätherischen Verfahren kein Mittel unversucht lassen; wenn nun das sittliche Gefühl ein Bedürfniß nach seiner Religion hat, aber für dasselbe nirgend Befriedigung findet, so ist es um so leichter, dasselbe für die Religion der Mehrheit zu stimmen. Die Erfahrung lehrt es täglich, daß die Missionäre überall den Mangel an Religionskenntniß benutzen und gern darauf hin ihre listigen Kunstgriffe richten. Wir haben keine Argumente zur Anstellung von Lehrern, was nur von der Gemeinde selbst gefordert werden könnte. Aber um diese Forderung zu veranlassen, um unsere Glaubensgenossen aus dem der Moralität so gefährlichen Schlafe zu wecken, heischt es die Billigkeit, daß die Regierung dies zum Wohle ihrer Unterthanen wohl erwäge und sich endlich entschließe, die gegenwärtige Gelegenheit als ein Mittel zu ergreifen zum Versuch, jenen traurigen Uebelstand zu beseitigen.

3. Auch aus einem philanthropischen Gesichtspunkte verdient diese Unternehmung befördert zu werden. Es wäre überflüssig, Ihnen den unglücklichen Zustand zu schildern, worin die Mehrzahl unserer niederländischen Glaubensgenossen sich befindet. Es ist nicht zu leugnen, daß weder Industrie noch bürgerliche Gewerbe unter ihnen blühen. Die Ursache hiervon ist nicht, wie man häufig vorgeben will, in ihrer Fähigkeit, sondern in den Schwierigkeiten zu suchen, die von Anderen, ja selbst — zu unserem Leidwesen müssen wir es bekennen — aus unserer Mitte in den Weg gelegt werden. Können wir auch nicht genug die edle Mildthätigkeit vieler Andersgläubigen anerkennen, die reichlich die Beförderung

von Handwerken unter den Israeliten unterstützen, so stoßen wir doch gar zu oft auf alte Vorurtheile, die allein die Länge der Zeit überwinden kann. Ueberdies drückt die allgemeine Verbreitung des commerciellen Betriebes wegen der Lage der Niederlande sehr nachtheilig auf den gesammten Mittelstand und ganz besonders auf die Israeliten, unter welchen wir mit Leidwesen auch merklich den Handel abnehmen sehen. Ein Ausweg für die unter dem Segen Gottes zunehmende Bevölkerung wird auch ein immer dringenderes Bedürfniß, welchen aber die niederländischen überseeischen Besitzungen mit ihren vielen, dem Charakter der Israeliten völlig entsprechenden Handelszweigen ganz besonders anweisen. Jedoch sind die Israeliten in den Niederlanden so sehr ihrer Glaubenslehre und ihren vorväterlichen Gebräuchen ergeben, daß sie sich unmöglich entschließen können, sich in ein Land zu begeben, wo zur Ausübung ihrer heiligen Religion durchaus keine Gelegenheit besteht. Selbst Leichtsinnige verlangen noch sehnlich danach, dereinst inmitten ihrer heimgegangenen Glaubensbrüder zu ruhen, während diejenigen, die auch darin gleichgültig sind, selten in der Gesellschaft einen hohen Grad von Tugend und Moral erlangen werden. Die Stiftung einer israelitischen Kirchengenossenschaft in jenen Gegenden ist das einzige Mittel zur Abhülfe dieses Uebels, und um die gewünschte Hinwanderung zu erzielen, da doch solche Stiftung in der Regel mit der Vorsorge für einen besonderen Begräbnißplatz beginnt, wodurch der Israelit, bei der Furcht vor einem frühen Tode, mit welcher er Europa verläßt, von vornherein beruhigt ist und ermuthigt wird, sich ferner Gottes gütiger Vorsehung anzuvertrauen. Und auch sie, die noch bekümmert sind um Verletzung und Uebertretung der heiligen Vorschriften, sehen wenigstens in der Errichtung einer Synagoge die Möglichkeit, ihren religiösen Pflichten genügen zu können. Sehr richtig hat die Regierung bei der Eröffnung einer Colonisation in den westlichen Besitzungen die Organisation einer kirchlichen Leitung bereits erkannt. In Folge einiger darauf gerichteten Gesuche hat sie einige kirchliche Autoritäten zum Anschluß an ihre Unternehmung aufgefordert, welche sich auch ihrer Aufgabe rühmlichst erledigt, und deren wohlthätige Folgen in trüben Tagen sich deutlich herausgestellt haben. Auch für den Israeliten ist diese Leitung

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nicht minder nützlich und nothwendig, aber das Bestehen einer Synagoge steht bei ihm im Vordergrunde, weil diese ihn erst recht in den Stand setzt, als religiöser Israelit leben zu können, und darum war die Errichtung einer Kirche stets die erste Sorge jeder Israelitengemeinde. Für die Gründung einer Kirchengenossenschaft in Ostindien, wozu ein Mann von Religiösität, Umsicht und Ausdauer erforderlich ist, ist nach unserer Ueberzeugung Niemand geeigneter, als der bekannte Reisende Herr Benjamin II. Diesem Manne, genau mit allen damit verbundenen Schwierigkeiten vertraut und vorbereitet sie zu überwinden, wird es wohl leicht sein, die nöthigen Vorkehrungen zu treffen und alles vorzubereiten zu einer Stiftung, die den Betreffenden Bürgschaft für ihre Gewissensscrupel gewährleistet und den weniger bemittelten Israeliten aus seiner Fahrlässigkeit und Bedenklichkeit zu heben und seine Leibes- und Geisteskräfte dort zu entwickeln, wo ihm eine bessere Zukunft lächelt.

4. Vornehmlich ist inzwischen von Seiten des mehr bemittelten Handelstandes das Verlangen nach der Verwirklichung dieses Planes laut geworden. Beim Anknüpfen von transatlantischen Handelsbeziehungen ist Zutrauen die erste Bedingung, um zu günstigem Resultat zu kommen, und der Niederländer läßt sich nicht leicht zu dem Zutrauen in ein fernes Land bewegen. Doch auch bei unsern Glaubensgenossen in andern Ländern finden solche Anknüpfungen meist zwischen Brüdern und Verwandten oder treu bewährten Handlungsdienern statt. Durch das Bestehen solcher Verbindungen lockert die große Entfernung nicht im mindesten die Bande der Liebe, der Verwandtschaft und der Freundschaft. Für den israelitischen Niederländer besteht jedoch eine sehr beträchtliche Schwierigkeit in der Entbehrung aller kirchlichen Gemeinschaft, wodurch er seiner vorväterlichen Religion erhalten werden könnte. Die Veränderung des Glaubens löst auch zugleich die Bande der Blutsverwandtschaft auf und erregt Mißtrauen im gegenseitigen Verkehr, ja zerstört nicht selten selbst die mit so vieler Mühe zu Stande gebrachte Handelsverbindung. Allein die Gründung einer Kirchengenossenschaft ist geeignet, alle Furcht zu verscheuchen und Jeder würde dann auch opferwillig sein, um die einmal bestehenden Einrichtungen zu erhalten und möglichst zu vervollkommnen.

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Die Ausbreitung von Handelsverkehr vermehrt den Wohlstand und muß zweifelsohne auch auf die Kirchengenossenschaften im Mutterlande günstig einwirken durch das Emporkommen ihrer Glieder. Dies ist gewiß ein triftiger Grund und für Sie, denen die israelitischen Angelegenheiten zur Beherzigung anvertraut sind, genügend, um thatkräftig den vorliegenden Plan zu begünstigen und die Mitwirkung der hohen Regierung zu dessen Verwirklichung zu erstreben.

5. Unsere Vorstellung empfiehlt sich selbst auch wegen der materiellen Interessen, die den Mitgliedern unserer Glaubensgenossenschaft daraus erwachsen. Bei der beständigen Zunahme von Concurrenz in allen Fächern suchen Eltern und Vormünder für die Gegenstände ihrer Liebe und Sorge ein gutes Unterkommen, was aber mit jedem Tage schwieriger zu finden ist. Die Erfahrung zeigt uns viele von unseren europäischen Glaubensgenossen, die in fernen Welttheilen eine gute Existenz und ein hohes Ansehen in der Handelswelt erlangt haben. Die von dem Handelsgeist noch nicht genug ausgebeuteten ostindischen Colonien würden für unsere in voller Lebenskraft stehende und mit einigen Geldmitteln ausgerüstete Jugend einen bequemen Weg eröffnen zur Verwendung ihrer Kräfte und Kenntnisse und zu einem hoffnungsvollen Versuche ihres Glückes. Nur der fromme Religionssinn kann nicht leicht beschließen, das ewige Heil für das zeitliche Glück zu wagen. Von dieser Seite betrachtet würde die Aussicht zur Errichtung einer Synagoge, wo das erste religiöse Bedürfniß befriedigt werden kann, Eltern und Vormünder bestimmen, ihre Zöglinge dahin ziehen zu lassen. Im Vertrauen auf die moralischen Principien, die ihnen bisher eingeschärft sind, werden ihre sorgfältigen Erzieher sie ruhig hinsenden nach einer zwar fernen Gegend, wo jedoch mit größerer Sicherheit als hier ein gutes Bestehen im Weltgeschäft und auch himmlisches Brod im Schoße der Kirche ihnen geboten wird. Ja selbst die größere Thätigkeit und Vorsicht, an welche sie sich in den ersten Jahren nach ihrer Ankunft dort werden gewöhnen müssen, würde einen günstigen Einfluß auf ihre Moralität und Religiösität ausüben und Leichtsinn und Gleichgültigkeit, die jetzt beim Mangel an Beschäftigung in ihrem Geiste wurzeln, würden sich dann in Ernst und Eifer verwandeln.

6. Schon die einfache Absicht dieser Reise, um nämlich von dort aus noch fernere Nachforschung zu thun nach dem Zustande unserer Glaubensgenossen in mehreren Theilen Asiens, verdient Ermuthigung und unsere Unterstützung. Zwar scheint dieses von keinem Interesse für die Regierung zu sein; doch bei genauer Prüfung leuchtet es ein, daß auch diese aus allgemeiner Menschenliebe in vollem Maß die Theilnahme unserer hohen Regierung verdient. Die Erfahrung aus den jüngsten Jahren hat uns vielfach gelehrt, wie viele Vortheile für die Menschheit erwachsen sind durch die Vermittelung des einen Staates bei dem andern; wie diese Vermittelung, in Reichen, wo religiöse Duldsamkeit nie aufgekommen war, in der Jetztzeit eine vollkommene Freiheit und Gleichheit für alle Religionen errungen hat. Selbst die vor 30 Jahren unsere Glaubensgenossen betroffenen Unheile, entsprungen aus Religionshaß und schwärmerischem Eifer, und ausgeartet in Habsucht und Blutdurst, sind durch Einmischung von anderen Mächten gehemmt, so daß die Leiden der unglücklichen Schlachtopfer dadurch vermindert worden sind. In einer späteren Geschichte von Judenverfolgungen ist gerade eine Regierung für die Interessen der Menschheit aufgetreten, unter welcher nie die Emancipation bestanden hatte, und so hat sie die abscheulichen Mittel dazu entdeckt und das mißthätige Streben unterdrückt. Auch die Niederländer haben oft ihre Theilnahme an dem traurigen Loose von Unterdrückten in andern Ländern an den Tag gelegt, und überall wo Religionshaß Verfolgung verursachte, ihre Verwendung für die Verfolgten gern bewilligt. Vor kaum einem Jahrhundert hat auf Gesuch eines israelitischen Kirchenvorstandes in den Niederlanden die hohe Regierung ihre Fürsprache bei einer auswärtigen Regierung nicht verweigert, in Folge dessen dort der Befehl, daß die Israeliten ihre Geburts- und Wohnstätten zu räumen, zurückgenommen wurde. Aber noch seufzen viele unserer Glaubensbrüder unter dem Druck mancher Despoten im Orient, wovon der oben genannte Reisende merkwürdige Notizen liefert. Die Glaubwürdigkeit seiner Mittheilungen wird von den berühmtesten Gelehrten in Frankreich anerkannt, und ist auch durch kritische Untersuchung bewährt gefunden. Unser Reisender hat sich bereits seinen leidenden Brüdern an manchen Orten wohlthätig bewiesen. Es

würde daher unserer Regierung zu einem unvergänglichen Ruhm gereichen, wenn sie ihre hülfreiche Hand verleihen wollte zu Gunsten jener unglücklichen Mitmenschen, um so mehr, als wir blos von ihr wünschen, den Kostenaufwand der Reise zu übernehmen und weiter nichts. Wir halten uns überzeugt, daß, wenn erst eine kirchliche Gemeinschaft für die Israeliten dort zu Stande gekommen sein wird, unsere vermögenden Brüder hier wie dort durch mittelbare und unmittelbare Hülfe dieselbe unterstützen werden.

7. Ferneres Streben zur Entdeckung unserer zerstreuten Brüder von den niederländischen Colonien aus kann mit dem Segen Gottes auch von heilsamen Folgen für den materiellen Wohlstand unserer dasigen Glaubensbrüder werden und wahrscheinlich auch unserem niederländischen Handel neue Wege eröffnen. Die Geschichte der Zeit Karls des Großen theilt uns mit, daß gerade durch die Vermittelung unserer Glaubensbrüder sehr ausgebreitete Handelsbeziehungen mit Arabien und Persien angeknüpft wurden. Es scheint, daß das Aufsuchen von Handelsquellen der erste Anlaß zu der berühmten Reise von Benjamin de Tudela war; die mühselige Communication und die Grausamkeit des Mittelalters haben jedoch jene Reise fruchtlos gemacht, so daß die begonnenen Unternehmungen bald vereitelt wurden. Inzwischen glänzt der Unternehmungsgeist unserer Glaubensgenossen seit den Verfolgungen auf der iberischen Halbinsel und in Deutschland in den Blättern der spätern Geschichte, und wahrscheinlich haben auch die Niederlande zum Theil ihren blühenden Handel im Anfange des dreißigjährigen Krieges jenem Unternehmungsgeiste zu danken. Jetzt ist die Anknüpfung von Handelsbeziehungen durch die Ausbreitung der Gemeinschaft unserer Glaubensgenossen leichter zu erzielen. — Das Verlangen nach gläubig und wissenschaftlich gebildeten Israeliten hat viele derselben aus Bagdad und Arabien nach den englischen Besitzungen geführt, wo sie für ihren Unternehmungsgeist ein weites Feld gefunden und reiche Früchte davon geerntet haben. Bei der Zunahme von Bildung und Kenntnissen unter unseren westlichen Glaubensbrüdern wird es unserer Jugend jetzt weniger Mühe kosten, Vortheile von den neuen Wegen zu ziehen. Und einmal die Bemühungen begonnen zu ihrem ewigen Wohl, soll derjenige, der sich des Vertrauens seiner Glaubensbrüder in den

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niederländisch-ostindischen Besitzungen würdig gemacht hat, von ihnen auch zur Beförderung ihrer materiellen Interessen geeignet erachtet ist, dazu in den Stand gesetzt werden.

Wir waren so frei, diese verschiedenen Betrachtungen Ihrer hohen Weisheit zu Erwägung zu unterbreiten, und schmeicheln uns, durch Ihre Vermittelung die Mitwirkung der hohen Regierung zur Ausführung des erwähnten Planes zu erlangen. Die Art und Weise der Ausführung ist eine Nebensache, wenn nur die hohe Regierung unsere Vorstellung günstig aufnimmt. Wir wollen nur in den Vordergrund stellen, daß bei den vielen Transportmitteln, die der Regierung zu Gebote stehen, die Kosten verhältnißmäßig nur gering sind, und somit der Ausführung nichts im Wege steht. Die geringen Ausgaben stehen in keinem Verhältniß zu den unberechenbaren Vortheilen, die dieses Unternehmen verspricht. Ew. Wohlgeboren glauben wir diesen Plan besonders empfehlen zu dürfen, damit Sie in ihrem wohlthätigen Wirkungskreise diesem Plane noch besonders Vorschub leisten, um dadurch den Ruhm und die Verherrlichung Israels zu erhöhen, wenn einst durch Ihr Zuthun unter der niederländischen Flagge auch das Panier von Israels Kirchengenossenschaft in Ostindien flattern wird. Der Vorwurf einer Proselytenmacherei kann Ihnen keineswegs gemacht werden, da die Sendung sich nur auf die Hebung der Religion unter unseren eigenen Glaubensbrüdern beschränkt, was ein reines Werk der Gottesfurcht ist, wohlgefällig dem Gotte Israels. Es wird ein edles Streben genannt werden, wenn unter Israel Tugend und Rechtschaffenheit, Wohlfahrt und Heil zunehmen werden, wenn durch Israels Menschenliebe und Wohlthätigkeit für so viele müßige Hände segensreiche Quellen angewiesen sind; wenn durch reichliche Unterstützung des Gewerbfleißes so mancher Israelit angefeuert wird und unter dem Schutze einer Kirchengenossenschaft sich von allen drückenden Banden befreit sehen wird. Hierin wird die Erfüllung erkannt werden von den Worten des Propheten: „w'erastich".

Gegeben durch uns Oberrabbiner der niederländischen Hauptsynagoge zu Rotterdam und Haag.

Rotterdam und Haag, Jjar 5617 (Mai 1857.

(Folgen die Unterschriften wie oben.)

Von Seiten der Hauptcommission wurde gegen die vorstehende Denkschrift die Schwierigkeit geltend gemacht, daß ich als Ausländer, wie jeder Andere, nur unter dem Nachweis einer gewissen Vermögenssumme nach Niederländisch-Ostindien gehen könne. Um diese Schwierigkeit zu heben, wandte ich mich an die Professoren der orientalischen Sprachen bei der Universität zu Leyden und Delfzyl, auf deren besondere Empfehlung mir vom Minister die Erlaubniß ertheilt wurde, ohne den Nachweis eines Vermögens nach Niederländisch-Ostindien zu gehen. — Da sich jedoch ein definitiver Entscheid der Hauptcommission verzögerte, so reiste ich nach Frankfurt a. M., erlernte dort zum Zweck meiner zweiten Reise die Photographie und Stereoskopie und schaffte mir zugleich die dazu nöthigen Apparate an.

Von dort wandte ich mich, da aus dem Haag kein Definitivum anlangte, nach Hannover und gab hier das vorliegende Werk heraus. Ich hoffe nunmehr unter dem Schutze des Allmächtigen, nachdem ich meine persönlichen und Familienverhältnisse in meiner Heimath geordnet habe, meine zweite Reise anzutreten, und unter dem Beistande des Ewigen nochmals jene Länder zu durchforschen, die die Wiege aller Wissenschaft und Weisheit sind, und deren Geheimnisse nur zu lange in Nacht und Dunkel verborgen lagen.

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